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Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Thursday
7 March 1996

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March 1996

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Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-046 *7 March 1996*

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Russia: Yeltsin Opens Security Council Meeting on Chechnya

LD0703094396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0845 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (Itar-Tass) — "At a meeting of the Security Council there is one question on the agenda — ratification of the program for the settlement of the Chechen issue," Russian President Boris Yeltsin said, opening today's sitting of the Security Council in the Kremlin. As noted by the head of state, the program had been compiled taking into account proposals of the two commissions — the government one, headed by Viktor Chernomyrdin, and the Presidential Council headed by Emil Pain — also taking into account proposals of the presidential structures. Boris Yeltsin said that he would deliver "a brief report with these proposals." Then, the head of state said, there will be discussion of remarks and proposals made by members of the Security Council. "We must confirm today the program for the settlement of the conflict," the president stressed.

In the meeting of the Russian Federation Security Council those taking part are all its members as well as those invited — Emil Pain, the head of the working group under the president for completing combat actions in Chechnya; Nikolay Yegorov, the head of the administration of the president; Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, Russian Federation minister for national and federal relations; Doku Zavgayev, the head of the Chechen republic; Valeriy Manilov, deputy secretary of the Security Council; and Viktor Ilyushin, Yuriy Baturin, and Mikhail Krasnov, the president's aides.

Despite the ban imposed by the doctors, Oleg Lobov, secretary of the Security Council, who had had a heart operation a few days ago, arrived at the meeting.

Russia: Yeltsin: Program for Chechen Settlement Approved

LD0703110696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1035 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin decided not to reveal the details of the program for the settlement of the Chechen conflict approved today at a meeting of the Russian Federation Security Council. At a meeting with correspondents as the meeting ended, the head of state said "we have a serious rival — illegal armed formations." "When all the fine points are sorted out, perhaps by the end of March, I will hold a news conference for the public and the whole world or speak on television with a detailed outline of the settlement plan," the president said.

According to Boris Yeltsin's assessment, the sitting of the Security Council "was difficult. This is understandable because the actual problem is difficult." The head of state noted that the program for the settlement of the Chechen conflict has been prepared very thoroughly and comprehensively by "many, many minds."

In particular, Boris Yeltsin said, 30 experts were involved in the work of the commission of Emil Pain, in addition to the members of the Presidential Council; about 50 men worked on the commission of Viktor Chernomyrdin. The presidential structures had also prepared their own program. "We have merged the three programs, having taken the best out of each one. Meaning no offense to anybody, we have concretely defined who is responsible for what by month and date," the president said.

Speaking at the request of correspondents about the proposals of some politicians to set up a mediation mission in Chechnya, Boris Yeltsin said he knew about these proposals, but added that "Doku Zavgayev has now been working there quite successfully. He spoke a lot at the meeting of the Security Council today too. He is concerned that mutual understanding should be reached at the Chechen and regional levels as soon as possible," the president said. "They have been signing treaties with individual districts," the president said, "while what we are saying is that a district will not get any budget funds until the situation there is stabilized."

Russia: Yeltsin: No Funds to Chechnya Until Situation Stabilizes

LD0703162096 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Video report by Mikhail Aleksandridi; including recorded remarks by Russian President Boris Yeltsin; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Igor Vykhukholev] The Russian Security Council today passed in the main the program of the settlement of the Chechen conflict. However, it will be finally approved in a week's time, after being reworked by an appointed group of experts.

[Aleksandridi] It was announced after the Security Council sitting today that the program has amalgamated three, rather than two as it was suggested earlier, variants of Moscow's actions, prepared by the Chernomyrdin and Pain commissions, as well as by the presidential structures. It has also transpired that some of its details will remain secret.

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Yeltsin and Zavgayev discussed steps which must lead to cessation of hostilities. According to Medvedev, Yeltsin emphasized that this is one of his priorities.

The two men, Medvedev said, also discussed the financing of economy and social sphere rebuilding and job creation in the Chechen Republic.

Russia: Zavgayev Opposes Proposal for 'All-Chechnya Assembly'

LD0603182696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1645 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (Itar-Tass) — Moscow-backed Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev on Wednesday said he opposed convening an all-Chechnya assembly which had been proposed by some Chechen living both in and outside the republic.

Zavgayev told Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin that such an assembly would serve the interests of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev and his supporters.

The signing of separate peace agreements between Chechen settlements and the federal command are more efficient in solving the problem, Zavgayev said.

Over 50 towns and villages in Chechnya have signed such agreements. Besides, more powers should be transferred to the government which was set up after the latest elections in Chechnya, he said.

Russia: Chechen Premier Asks Chernomyrdin for More Support

LD0603181196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1614 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 6 (Interfax) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin received the head of the Chechen republic Doku Zavgayev in Moscow on Wednesday. The two men discussed ways of settling the conflict in Chechnya.

According to sources close to the government, Zavgayev asked Chernomyrdin for greater support for the Chechen government. Zavgayev complained that his government did not have enough powers.

Zavgayev also asked Chernomyrdin to transfer to his government a number of powers currently belonging to the numerous federal agencies.

Zavgayev said he had certain doubts about the idea of holding a Chechen assembly. He fears that such conference would give Dzhokhar Dudayev the political initiative.

The leader of Chechnya's official government believes it will be more reasonable to conclude peace and co-operation agreements with the authorities of individual communities. Zavgayev said that such agreements had already been concluded with more than 50 of Chechnya's 350 communities.

Russia: NTV Critical of Grachev, Army's Success in Chechnya

LD0603180896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report over video from Chechnya by correspondent Vladimir Luskanov — from the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The visit by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev to the North Caucasus, far from throwing light on the situation in Chechnya, has actually confused it even further.

Let us remind you that Grachev visited Groznyy on Monday and was satisfied with the actions of the army against what he described as petty gangs of bandits.

Meanwhile, over the past two weeks, neither the army nor the Ministry of Internal Affairs have been able to carry out a single successful combat operation. At least, they have nothing to boast about to journalists.

The operation to seize Dudayev's citadel, the settlement of Bamut, yielded no results but seriously complicated relations with the authorities of Ingushetia.

The four-day storming of Sernovodsk did not inflict any loss upon Dudayev's fighters, for whom Sernovodsk was never the main base, but gave rise to the problem of 9,000 refugees and that problem in no way enhances support for the army.

Dudayev's fighters are still a force. They are not only defending themselves successfully but are carrying out offensive actions. [passage omitted]

Before returning to Moscow, Pavel Grachev admitted today that his views on how to stabilize the situation in Chechnya have changed somewhat. It is possible that he will tell the president of the country at the Security Council sitting tomorrow. [video shows Grachev with troops, military hardware]

Russia: Grachev Changes Views on Chechen Settlement

LD0603153696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1501 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Viktor Zhilyakov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KRASNODAR March 6 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Defence minister Pavel Grachev

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changed his views on ways of the Chechen settlement and would disclose them at a meeting of Russia's Security Council on Thursday.

Grachev, who inspected military units in the southern Krasnodar region on Wednesday, told army officers that he had designed his own scenario for Chechnya after a one-day trip to the rebel republic on Monday.

He said the trip made him disagree with proposals on the settlement of the Chechen crisis advanced by some experts. "Two or three months ago I supported such views, but the trip to Chechnya opened my eyes on many things", Grachev said, but did not elaborate.

However, he reiterated that no large-scale military operations would be conducted in Chechnya as "there are no major bandit formations there".

Grachev also said that an inter-Chechen dialogue is one of the ways out of the crisis.

Russia: Yeltsin Says Groznyy 'Cleared'; Admits Troops' Losses

LD0703101996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0955 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (Itar-Tass) — "Dudayevites succeeded in moving up the remaining troops — according to various reports, 500-600-700 men — but, nevertheless, today the town was cleared, though our side suffered losses," Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated, answering a question from an ITAR-TASS correspondent on the situation in the town of Groznyy after the sitting of the Russian Security Council ended.

Russia: Grachev Says Media Exaggerating Chechen Fighting

LD0703093596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Anastasia Dadyko; from the "Vesti" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Given all the reports coming in from Chechnya, the statements made by top officials of the Chechen Republic and Russia yesterday — when battles raged throughout Groznyy — seem strange to say the least. [passage omitted]

[Begin Grachev recording] Nothing supernatural has happened there. There is no blockade at all of Groznyy. There have not been any substantial captures there. There were provocations yesterday and today, but nothing extraordinary.

I do not understand why and for what reasons all the broadcasts exaggerate the situation. Why does the "Vesti" program, and others, begin with events in Chechnya and show virtually one and the same thing? One must ask why this is being done. Who benefits from this? Who needs this? [end recording]

Russia: Head of OMON in Groznyy Reported Killed

LD0603182896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1815 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY March 6 (Itar-Tass) — At least six policemen were killed in fighting in Groznyy on Wednesday, including the head of the elite OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] police of Chechnya, Tass learned from reliable sources in Groznyy which said the exact death toll was impossible to specify by now.

The OMON chief was killed by a sniper. Other casualties included four Chechen policemen and a security officer.

It is impossible to evacuate the bodies of other victims as Chechen militants open fire on any moving vehicle.

In the meantime, Chechen first deputy premier Abdula Bugayev rejected media reports that the building of the Chechen Interior department (MVD) had been seized by separatists.

"As for 21:15 Moscow time (18:15 GMT) the building of the republican MVD was under absolute control of the government", he told Tass by telephone.

Bugayev added that the governing bodies of Chechnya were working in a "stable way" in their residence in the centre of Groznyy.

"The situation in the city is complicated, but controlled. Regardless of the actions of federal troops, the Chechen MVD has all the forces to avert the seizure of key objects housing the governing bodies of the republic", he said.

Tass correspondent, who is staying in the hotel nextdoors to the building of the Interior department, can see that it works in full swing and all the windows are alight.

Bugayev also told a press conference that many Chechen settlements are ready to send their armed residents to help fight the militants in Groznyy.

"People are calling from many regions of the republic, except for the Shatoy and Vedeno regions, saying they

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are ready to come for help to Groznyy", he said adding that there was no need for such help.

The Vedeno region in southern Chechen mountains is under the control of the separatists. Their leader Dzhokhar Dudayev is believed to be hiding there, as well as the headquarters of the separatists under the command of Aslan Maskhadov.

The Shatoy region borders on Vedeno and is mostly neutral as its residents do not back either Dudayev or pro-Moscow Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev.

The region was among the first to join the peace protocol with the republican government and have the federal troops withdrawn from its territory.

Russia: About 1,000 Militants Reportedly Stormed Groznyy

LD0703100896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0940 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY March 7 (Itar-Tass) — The number of Chechen militants, who stormed Groznyy on Wednesday, is now estimated by the Chechen government at 1,000 and fighting was most fierce in the industrial district of the city on Thursday.

The militants seized 84 Russian construction workers who are being kept in a building in central Lenin street and exploded a fuel oil pipeline causing a fire, Chechen deputy premier Abdula Bugayev told a press conference on Thursday adding that a number of national economy objects had been also destroyed, including three water-pumping units.

Bugayev said it was impossible to extinguish the fire at the heat and electricity generating plant of Groznyy as fighting raged in the area where the pipeline was exploded.

"As for 11:30 (08:30 GMT) the situation was most complicated in the Zavodskoy district of Groznyy", he said.

Bugayev quoted military sources as saying that 19 Russian troops were killed and 39 wounded in Wednesday fighting. The losses of the militants were 130 killed and 200 wounded. There was no independent confirmation to the reports.

Bugayev said there were some 1,000 militants in the city and accused law enforcement agencies for allowing them to penetrate into Groznyy posing for civilians. He said the weapons had been delivered to the city in advance.

However, he stressed that the Chechen government is not going to flee the city and continues working in its residence in downtown Groznyy. "The government of Chechnya is working in a normal regime and is not going to leave anywhere", Bugayev said.

Russia: Federal Official: Groznyy 'Getting Back to Normal'

LD0703072196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0650 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 7 Mar (Itar-Tass) — The socio-political and crime situation in the Chechen republic remains tense, however, the first signs that it is getting back to normal are appearing. The markets that have opened this morning in various locations of Groznyy are a sign of this, Akhmed Dakayev, the chief of staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Chechen republic, reported.

Reports from the spot are constantly coming in to the republic's Ministry of Internal Affairs. Akhmed Dakayev stressed that the situation in the republic is under control. On 6 March, according to information from the ministry, a group of fighters from the Chechen OMON [special purpose militia] offered active resistance to the armed fighters around the settlement of Chernorechiye and fought their way out of encirclement.

Russia: Correspondent Updates Situation in Chechnya

LD0703105296 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 0900 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Video report by Grigoriy Brynza via radiotelephone from Chechnya; from the "Novosti" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The situation in Groznyy remains extremely complex. Battles continued in some of the city suburbs practically all night. Toward morning the intensity of fire abated, but from about 1000 fire from submachine guns and gunfire was practically nonstop.

The commandant of Chechnya reported that by morning 30 servicemen of the federal troops had been killed and approximately 70 wounded. These are preliminary results and they are still being checked.

The local militia has also suffered losses. So far it has been reported that 14 militiamen have been killed.

The information that some of the officials of the Chechen Ministry of Internal affairs had defected to the militants has not been confirmed.

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At the news center of the Chechen Ministry of Internal Affairs we were told that two companies of the patrol service, as well as some OMON [special assignment militia detachments] officials had been surrounded by the militants, but they have now broken through the blockade.

Abdula Bugayev, deputy head of the Chechen Republic's government, told us that yesterday three reservoirs and a fuel oil pipeline had been blown up and the latter is on fire at present. All the firemen of the city have been sent there to try to put it out, but so far it has proved impossible to localize the fire.

Bugayev also reported that on Lenin street in the center of the city the militants had kidnapped 84 workers.

There is no information so far about civilian casualties. A lot of people have been killed and wounded.

Emin Asmayev, chairman of the parliament of the Chechen Republic, noted that unfortunately the events in Groznyy could have sad consequences because of the vendetta factor. At the same time he added that in spite of the fact that military actions are continuing in Groznyy, there are plans to sign a peace agreement in the Naurskiy district and the village of Kurchaloy.

Russia: Separatists Resist Federal Attacks in Chechnya

LD0703120196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, Mar 7 (Interfax) — Ten-to-fifteen-man groups of separatist fighters are resisting federal attacks at milk farm no. 15 and Voinov village of the Staropromyslovskyi district of Groznyy, chief-of-staff of the Chechen Ministry of Internal Affairs Colonel Ahmed Dakayev told Interfax.

Seven Chechen police officers were killed and six wounded, according to preliminary reports, in clashes with separatist forces that entered Groznyy Tuesday night. Dakayev accused supporters of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev of setting an out-patient clinic of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and a number of other buildings on fire in Groznyy.

Dakayev reports gunfire battles between the "remaining" Dudayev militants and police forces and interior troops.

The police and interior troops are on the whole controlling developments in Groznyy, Dakayev said.

Dakayev rejected foreign media reports that said some police forces had defected to Dudayev.

Russia: Filming Banned in Groznyy; Shelling Continues

LD0703065796 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0200 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The situation in Groznyy at nightfall deteriorated again. According to [Abdulla] Bugayev, first deputy prime minister of the Chechen government, a large group of armed fighters are under siege in the area around Minutka Square. The federal troops have drawn up artillery and are shelling the Chechen fighters to destroy them.

According to unconfirmed data, federal forces losses yesterday are 25 killed and approximately 50 wounded. It is also reported that 10 Chechen militiamen have been killed.

The Chechen fighters have blown up three reservoirs in Groznyy and have sealed off the Groznyy thermal electric power station. Speaking on television, Dzhokhar Dudayev stated that the armed action in Groznyy has been carried out on his orders.

According to a "Vesti" report, all correspondents have been brought together in the hotel of the territorial administration in Groznyy and filming in the city has been banned. Correspondents are also not allowed to go into the Chechen village of Sernovodsk, which, according to some information, is being shelled by the federal forces just as before. In addition, independent sources are reporting that civilians are not being allowed to leave the village.

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CIS: CIS Countries To Establish Common Air Defense System

LD0603182396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1647 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Artem Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (Itar-Tass) — The CIS Interstate Economic Committee has approved a package of documents establishing and modernising a common air defence system in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The documents include a draft decision of the Council of the CIS Heads of State concerning the establishment and modernisation of the common air defence system and a draft decision of the Council of the CIS Heads of Government to provide funding for the restoration of air defence systems in Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as for the operation of the Coordinating Committee for Air Defence under the Council of the CIS Defence Ministers.

To carry out the programme, a special interstate financial and industrial group, Granit, will be set up. It will include Russian and Ukrainian industrial and research institutions which provide the former Soviet air defence troops with equipment and technologies.

The CIS Interstate Economic Committee also approved draft statutes of the CIS Interstate Statistics Committee and the Interstate Ecological Fund, and draft agreements on mutual supplies of agricultural machinery and on customs and tariff cooperation.

Russian Vice-Prime Minister Aleksey Bolshakov, who is the chairman of the CIS Interstate Economic Committee board, was absent because of sickness. The session was chaired by his first deputy Vladimir Pokrovskiy.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 7 Mar 96

LD0703074596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0729 GMT 7 Mar 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow March 7 (Itar-Tass) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based Russian newspapers dated March 7.

IZVESTIYA on Boris Yeltsin's remarks at an all-Russia congress on a legal reform.

"For the first time since his decision to enter the presidential race, Yeltsin has openly and even with a certain degree of combativeness has declared a battle against communist ideology and against those who seek to bring it back into our life," the newspaper writes.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the president's resistance to attempts to bring the old ways back.

"Boris Yeltsin does not accept either a negation of the ideas of the Constitution, the longing to revert to the old Soviet-party-style system, or demands for strongarm methods, and conversion of Russia into a police state," the newspaper points out.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA on priorities in Russia's advance to a law-governed state.

"The president has outlined the following four priorities in Russia's advance to a law-governed state: to improve legislation, step up the judicial reform, further streamline the functioning of the executive branch of power and to enhance the legal education of the country's citizens".

PRAVDA on correlation of forces in the run-up to presidential elections.

"Known already now are the names of those who will really contend for participation in the presidential election race by collecting the necessary one million signatures of supporters. Gennadiy Zyuganov has been officially registered as a presidential contender.

"There is no doubt that support groups of Boris Yeltsin will announce soon that they have collected one million signatures.

"There is every indication that Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, Svyatoslav Fedorov, Aleksandr Lebed, Aleksandr Rutskoy, and Mikhail Gorbachev are likely to collect signatures on time as well.

"There will be possibly another several presidential contenders, whose financial and organisational resources will enable them to participate in the election race. Thus, in all probability, not more than ten presidential contenders, whose names have already been mentioned, in the main, will line up at the start of the race," the newspaper writes in an analytical article headlined "Elections: The Correlation of Forces".

TRUD on Gennadiy Zyuganov's remarks on Communist Party intentions.

The newspaper carries an interview with the first officially registered presidential candidate, Gennadiy Zyuganov.

"Our party differs from the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) in many respects. We recognise the multistructural character of the economy, the plurality of opinions, and the freedom of religion. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, relying on Russian traditions, will work to master everything useful that exists in world political and economic practice."

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IZVESTIYA on the sharply aggravated situation in Groznyy.

The newspaper runs a dispatch by Alvi Karimov, correspondent of the Chechen news agency Vainakhpress, who writes that "Dudayev militants, at a strength of up to 300, on Tuesday attacked six checkpoints of Federal forces and seized two district police departments, taking a large group of military and civilian persons as hostages".

IZVESTIYA also reports the death of Chechen terrorist Salman Raduyev. He died in hospital of wounds he had sustained the day before. The newspaper believes that "special-purpose services had been instructed to launch a manhunt for Raduyev and kill him".

"Considering that even inside Chechnya, Raduyev (unlike Basayev) was not in favour either with Dudayev or Maskhadov, he just could not expect that Moscow would allow him to go scot-free after the Kizlyar and Pervomaiskoye massacre," the newspaper points out.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on the fighting in Chechnya.

"The killing of several tens of militants in Sernovodsk can hardly be added to a list of great victories. Perhaps only the death of Salman Raduyev, who was heavily wounded during the exchange of fire, may serve as a kind of justification for the days-long fighting".

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Russia: Moscow To Pay $484.5 Million to World Organizations

MK0603133596 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Russia Will Pay International Organizations More Than $484 Million"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation's payments to the various international organizations of which it is a member will amount this year to $484.5 million. This is stated in a Russian Government decree. The Russian Federation will make the largest payments to the United Nations — $403 million. Russia is to pay under its financial commitments $24 million to UNESCO, $12 million to the IAEA, $20 million to the World Health Organization, and $15 million to the International Labor Organization.

Russia: U.S. Poultry Imports 'Will Not Be Stopped' 16 Mar

LD0603142296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1410 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (Interfax) - Imports of U.S. chicken meat to Russia will not be stopped on March 16, Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin informed the U.S. administration on instructions from Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

U.S. vice President Albert Gore earlier spoke against the stoppage of deliveries in a letter to the Russian head of government, prompted by a warning from the Russian veterinary service on the possible ban on imports for the violation of sanitation norms, Chernomyrdin's press secretary told Interfax Wednesday.

The spokesman said a telephone conversation between Chernomyrdin and Gore is scheduled for 3:15 p.m. Moscow time Wednesday, during which the two sides are to discuss chicken imports among other things. The press secretary spoke against dramatizing the situation and voiced the assurance that the problem will be settled in the spirit of constructive trade and economic cooperation agreements between Moscow and Washington.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Expresses Willingness To Buy U.S. Chicken

LD0603172296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1653 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 6 (Itar-Tass) - Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told US Vice-President Albert Gore that Russia would continue to buy U.S. chicken if international sanitary norms were observed, but made it clear that the current suspension of imports cannot be lifted immediately.

"We are going and shall buy chicken in America, but with obligatory observation of international sanitary norms", Chernomyrdin told Gore during a 30-minute telephone conversation on Wednesday.

The conflict over U.S. chicken erupted after Russia suspended the imports from February 16 putting in doubt the sanitary quality of the food. Besides, import duties were raised by five per cent and Chernomyrdin explained that it was done to protect domestic producers.

"This is not a discriminatory measure against US foodstuffs and, surely, it cannot be assessed as a double increase of the duties. This measure was introduced to protect domestic producers of the same foodstuffs", Chernomyrdin said according to government spokesman Sergei Kolesnikov.

He added that the problem of sanitary norms should be solved jointly by Russian and U.S. experts and said that "we cannot resort to any hasty measures because the issue of correspondence of U.S. food to veterinary-sanitary requirements is the issue of the health of Russians".

At the same time Chernomyrdin explained that sanitary requirements to US chicken had not been toughened. "The veterinary certificate of that type of food products has been valid since 1993. Its norms did not change and they fully correspond to the existing international standards", Kolesnikov quoted the premier as saying.

But Chernomyrdin stressed that "there are problems (with chicken imports) which are to be resolved and I treat this issue seriously and normally".

He said that the problems should be solved "first and foremost, by experts of veterinary-sanitary services, as well as of the U.S. Department of Agriculture".

Russia: FBI's Freeh Cited on Anti-Crime Cooperation

MM0603140796 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Vladimir Nadein plus postscript: "FBI Arrests Four [as published] on Charge of Stealing $10 2 Million From 24 Russian Companies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] New York-Washington — The director of the FBI has described a joint investigation carried out by his agents and Russian Internal Affairs Ministry officers as an "unparalleled success and a striking example of the new cooperation." The investigation lasted 30 months and has culminated in charges being

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leveled against four inhabitants of New York. Three of them have been arrested and one is on the run.

Mary White, prosecutor for New York's south side, informed journalists that the charges against the four former Soviet citizens will be examined by the federal court. Two of the charged, 50-year-old Lev Breskin and 36-year-old Aleksandr Korogodskiy are U.S. citizens; 49-year-old Yakov Portnov and 41-year-old Georgiy Iosipyan are Russian citizens, but they too live permanently in New York.

Having not a dime to their name, no business experience, nor any reputable contacts whatsoever in the United States, this foursome managed to swindle $10.2 million from 24 different Russian companies, of which $4.6 million, including $2 million donated to help the victims of Chernobyl, had already been netted by the swindlers.

Breskin, Portnov, and Korogodskiy won over their Russian partners with promises that they would supply computers and computer parts at prices much lower than market prices. They demanded 100-percent prepayment, citing the strict rules of the Newtel company, which was registered at No. 512, Fifth Avenue, in Manhattan's prestigious business district.

You could put it differently, you could say "it moved in," but that would be a gross exaggeration. Newtel had only a mailing address and answering machine at No. 512. And not a single square foot of office space.

The swindlers' stock-in-trade was as follows: They collected money throughout Russia, having no possibility or wish to supply even a single computer in exchange.

Breskin and Portnov were the main players in the swindle operation. Having obtained $4,681,841 and 59 cents from duped Russian organizations and establishments, they were able to launder (mainly) via Russian and foreign banks $3,850,328 and 95 cents, which included $1 million which was transferred directly to a New York bank in March 1992.

With regard to this episode the charge will demand the confiscation from the two accused of the total sum of $3,850,328 and 95 cents plus all their property.

The Russian and American detectives achieved a very high level of cooperation and mutual understanding during the inquiry. Using a colloquial expression which does not sound offensive in America, the FBI director said that the two countries "have built a reliable cop-to-cop bridge," from which we have derived mutual benefit. "The new legal attache, an FBI representative, has worked in Russia productively and in close cooperation with the Russian police, which has borne fruit in the shape of today's arrests and charges (leveled)," Louis Freeh said. "These efforts have also been backed up by joint programs to upgrade professional skills, in which FBI agents and policemen from Russia and other countries have taken part."

The post of special FBI representative in the U.S. Embassy was created in Moscow in the summer of 1994, shortly after the first visit to Russia by Freeh, who had at the time only recently been appointed FBI director. The main task of the FBI's Moscow office is to coordinate actions with its hosts. International organized crime requires the concerted efforts of the law-enforcement agencies of various countries.

In Freeh's opinion, "a large part of the crime engulfing the United States has foreign sources, and we are carrying out urgent studies with law-abiding states to develop new effective programs to counter violence, which affects everyone of us, and to combat thieves, who destroy the financial well-being of us all."

The trial date has not yet been set. If the charge is proved, Iosipyan faces a 5-year term of imprisonment and a $250,000 fine; Korogodskiy 10 years in prison and a $500,000 fine; while Breskin and Portnov face 30 years apiece with a $7.5 million fine. [Nadein report ends]

Postscript: Our correspondent Yuriy Snegirev has learned at the Russian MVD Information Administration that it has not received any official confirmation from America of the capture of the members of the so-called "Russian mafia" in New York. Deputy administration chief Leonid Golovnev reported that they were expecting a fax from Interpol in the next few hours and that it was premature therefore to talk about the results of the joint operation with the FBI. The MVD will be holding a press conference next week where representatives of the American side are expected. This fruitful cooperation in catching criminals will continue in the future.

Russia: Soskovets Blames Zaveryukha for Chicken Dispute With U.S.

LD0603144296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1308 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 Mar — Speaking to an ITAR-TASS correspondent today, First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets spoke harshly against the suspension of deliveries of U.S. chicken thighs to Russia under the pressure of forces protecting the interests of Russian farmers. He criticized Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zaveryukha, who "has destabilized

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the situation on the commodities market with his ill-conceived actions."

Russian businessmen and the International Monetary Fund have both protested the embargo on the imports of U.S. chicken thighs to Russia, Oleg Soskovets said.

Withdrawing from the market the chicken thighs which all groups of the Russian population can afford would deal a severe blow to consumers, the first deputy prime minister added.

Russia: Authorities To Investigate Kalugin Case

MM0603152396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 2 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Article by Vladimir Klimov: "The Big Mouth Is a Find Not Only for the CIA"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no doubt in America that the agent Robert Lipka was betrayed by Oleg Kalugin. Another scandal is about to break out in Canada. But the KGB general remains calm.

U.S. intelligence regarded — and rightly so — GRU [Main Intelligence Directorate] General Dmitriy Polyakov as its superagent. He had betrayed more than 40 of our undercover agents. He got what he deserved for this — the supreme penalty.

But do traitors always receive their just punishment? This is not a rhetorical question at the moment. As has already been written, another spy scandal has erupted: Former National Security Agency staffer Robert Lipka has been arrested. U.S. Department of Justice representatives said that the FBI had been put on Lipka's trail by former KGB General Oleg Kalugin's memoirs.

There can be no doubt that his reminiscences are of interest not only to the FBI. The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) has also studied the former KGB general's book, with a magnifying glass, so to speak. It also mentions a major KGB agent who worked in Canadian intelligence.

In a special program the Canadian radio and television broadcasting corporation gave specific shape to Kalugin's revelations about a possible agent or agents in Canadian intelligence during the cold war. It went as follows. Former CSIS staffer Pierre Roi appeared on television and talked about the reasons why he was dismissed from the intelligence service. They are very unusual. Pierre Roi was investigating one of his own colleagues who was suspected of working for the KGB. Suddenly the order came to halt the investigation. The data assembled by Pierre Roi allegedly had not convinced the CSIS leadership.

Roi disobeyed the order and as a result found himself out of a job. But he sincerely believes, and he told viewers so, that the person he was investigation was a Soviet agent.

In the same program it was claimed that the Soviet Union had had many agents in Canada. The one referred to first and foremost was Igor Guzenko, cipher clerk at the Soviet Embassy, who betrayed his homeland in 1945.. And many years later this was effectively confirmed by Oleg Kalugin.

He did not name the agent. But there can be no doubt that the CSIS, thanks to its powerful computer system and other tricks, of which the special service knows plenty, will thoroughly check all the data. And possibly another sensational trial is not far off, of course as long as it benefits the country's ruling circles or people of influence there.

And how does a man who one would imagine knows a thing or two about the intelligence business assess his own actions? Kalugin held an extremely important post in the First Main Directorate (now the Foreign Intelligence Service [SVR]). He headed the internal security directorate, in other words his job was to identify and catch traitors in the organization's midst.

But the conscience of this man, who was a well known democrat in the recent past, is so eaten away by ambition that he is no longer capable of any kind of objective assessment of his actions. He is now totally denying any connection with the arrest of Robert Lipka, saying that he was first placed under surveillance in 1993, while his memoirs came out in 1994. Yet Kalugin is perfectly well aware that one indication is never enough for the arrest of an agent. Several indications have to come together at a single point. And the word from him, Kalugin, was the most important.

Actually, it is not the first time the KGB general has betrayed people working for his country. In 1990, at an election rally in Krasnodar — Kalugin was in a hurry to get into the USSR Supreme Soviet at the time — he talked about the Walker family in the United States, who were working for Soviet intelligence. After the candidate deputy's speech the Walker case was swiftly reviewed in America. One member of the family received 380 years in jail, the second received two life sentences plus 40 years.

On several occasions I have talked about Kalugin with intelligence professionals. They were all of the same opinion: It is surprising that this man is still at large. He is flouting all the norms and rules of the special services. One of them, incidentally, goes: Any former intelligence staffer, before publishing materials, must consult with

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colleagues currently in the service. When Kalugin wrote his book "First Directorate: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage Against the West," naturally he did not think of showing it to anyone in the SVR.

Now I would like to return to the rhetorical question: Will he who has acted in a way that is incompatible with the status of Russian citizen get the punishment he deserves? I was cheered by a report that has appeared in the newspapers: The Main Military Prosecutor's Office [GVP] is looking into the Kalugin case.

I contacted the GVP and asked them to explain the brief report.

"A prosecutor's check on this matter is scheduled to be carried out," I was told. "We have obtained a copy of the book and will be examining it. What kind of examination? The experts will say to what extent it is possible to incriminate the agent from the materials set out in the book; whether Kalugin has disclosed state secrets or not. But it must be stressed that we will not be dealing with personalities."

The latter is perfectly understandable, after all the SVR does not comment, even for the Military Prosecutor's Office, on whether or not agents are connected with their service. Will the Kalugin affair be a lesson to those who have clean forgotten what homeland essentially means?

Russia: Primakov Meets With Iranian Counterpart

LD0703112696 Tehran IRNA in English 1106 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 7, IRNA — The visiting Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in a meeting with his Russian counterpart Yevgeniy Primakov here on Thursday discussed expansion of bilateral ties and regional cooperation.

Underlining the significant role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in resolving regional issues, the Russian foreign minister said that the outcome of Velayati's visit to the Commonwealth of Independent States would help to establish peace and stability in the region.

The two sides also emphasized the need for joint cooperation in resolving the existing disputes and launching construction projects in Tajikistan based on the agreements reached in Tehran.

Denouncing the meddling by extraregional states in the internal affairs of the countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Velayati stressed that the issues facing the regional countries can only be solved through the cooperation of those countries themselves.

The two foreign ministers also exchanged views over the latest political developments in the Middle East and Balkans.

Russia: Mikhaylov: Russia May Train Iranian Nuclear Specialists

LD0603153296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1306 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 6 (Interfax) — Russia is considering the possibility of training Iranian nuclear specialists in Russia to work at the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran. The plant is being built with Russian assistance, Russian Nuclear Minister Viktor Mikhaylov told Interfax Wednesday.

Russia and Iran are planning to sign a contract on the specialists' training. "No such contract has been signed, but it will be," said Mikhaylov.

The Bushehr nuclear power plant is being built under a Russian-Iranian contract signed in January 1995. Its cost is about $800 million. The contract provides for supplies, assembly and adjustment of plant equipment, and commissioning of the plant's first power unit by the year 2000. The plant is expected to have a light-water reactor of the VVER-1,000 type.

Russia: Black Sea Fleet Solution Finally 'Moving'

MM0703103596 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Pasyakin: "No Mutual Accusations for the First Time. New Black Sea Fleet Commander Intends To Establish Fruitful Cooperation With Ukrainian Side"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol — New Black Sea Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Viktor Kravchenko's familiarization with the fleet began with the large unit of ships under the command of Rear Admiral Aleksandr Kovshar. During his next meeting, with Sevastopol Mayor Viktor Semenov, he discussed questions of cooperation between the Black Sea Fleet command and the city administration. The mayor noted, among other things, that he still wants the fleet's main base to remain in Sevastopol. As you know, most of the townspeople advocated that during a poll. "I have not come to Sevastopol for confrontation but to establish fruitful cooperation, which will help to resolve the countless problems faced by the fleet and the city," Kravchenko stressed.

Vice Adm. Viktor Kravchenko also met Vice Admiral Volodymyr Bezkorovaynyy, commander of the Ukrainian Navy — admittedly, behind closed doors. But the resolution of the Black Sea Fleet problem does

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finally seem to have gotten moving. This is also indicated by the fact that the two commanders' dialogue will not end with this first meeting. What is more, another round of talks between Russia, whose delegation includes the new commander, and Ukraine will take place in mid-March and then, as planned, in April the Russian and Ukrainian presidents will sign an agreement on the Black Sea Fleet whereby, according to Viktor Kravchenko, the fleet will acquire a "fitting status."

However, unlike the recent past, when the sides only accused one another of failing to implement previous agreements, the Black Sea Fleet coastal forces have received a letter from the newly formed Ukrainian artillery unit expressing "thanks for the good will and support" accorded during the transfer of military camps and property — which once again provides convincing evidence of a lessening of confrontation when it comes to resolving the problem of dividing up the Black Sea Fleet. Although — and this must also be remembered - - the sides by no means espouse the same positions with regard to the fleet installations that are to be handed over.

Russia: GRU Characterizes Ukrainian Espionage Charges as 'Absurd'

MK0703120296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 7 Mar 96 pp 1-2

Report by Igor Korotchenko under the "Special Services" rubric: "The GRU's Calm Reaction. The Russian Military Intelligence Service Denies Charges"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU] of the Russian Armed Forces' General Staff does not think it necessary to make official comments on the statement by the Ukrainian Supreme Council's deputy group "Derzhavnist" (see NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA of 06.03.96), because not only is its information on the Russian special services' subversive activities against Ukraine at odds with reality, but it is "absurd, bizarre, and silly," said a high-ranking GRU officer in a conversation with your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent. In his words, the "facts" cited in the statement cannot evoke anything but a smile from professionals. At the same time, the officer of the Russian military intelligence service did not rule out that this action may have been taken deliberately and that it might well be linked to the upcoming visit to Ukraine by Boris Yeltsin, because "a hoopla will be raised and the Ukrainian nationalists will attempt to undermine the emerging positive trends in relations between Kiev and Moscow."

Drawing on its sources, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, for its part, attempted to check how justified certain charges leveled by the Supreme Council are. In particular, it turned out that the naval intelligence center in Novorossiysk has been operating nearly since the postwar period, and was not set up especially for operations against Ukraine. As for assertions that the 6th administration of the GRU mulled over the organization of electronic intelligence operations against former USSR republics at its scientific and research institute's base in 1992, this thesis was not confirmed either. In reality, the issue was the restructuring of the GRU's agencies after the loss of a number of the 6th administration's facilities that were left on the territory of CIS countries. This required a redistribution of intelligence missions and a revision of priorities within the Russian Federation's strategic military intelligence community.

Information about the GRU's diversified space intelligence targeting Ukrainian military facilities appears to be an unsubstantiated allegation. The General Staff's Main Operational and Main Organizational-Mobilization Directorates have complete information on them anyway, while such a waste of the Russian intelligence satellites' orbital service life would hardly be possible these days.

The reality is that the United States, other NATO countries, as well as Japan, China, and the states of the Near East, hold particular interest for the GRU, not the miserable Ukrainian Army, whose level of combat readiness is currently not much higher than that of the armies of underdeveloped countries.

At the same time, it should be noted that Russian special services have information to the effect that the Ukrainian Security Service [SBU] has been collecting intelligence data at the Black Sea Fleet headquarters, which has included the use of special technical equipment. For instance, Admiral Eduard Baltin, former commander of the Black Sea Fleet, was even fearful of holding secret talks with Moscow via ZAS [expansion unknown] telephone lines, because he was warned that his telephones were tapped by the Ukrainian counter intelligence service. Furthermore, Moscow did not fail to take notice of the fact that a number of Ukrainian-born officers, who had earlier served in special structures of the Russian General Staff, were assigned to the SBU staff to supervise operations against the Black Sea Fleet's staff. Incidentally, the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA editorial board has specific information on these servicemen, but it has, as yet, refrained from publishing it.

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Russia: Seleznev, Swedish Parliament Speaker Discuss Relations

LD0703115196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1129 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Nikolay Vukolov and Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stockholm March 7 (Itar-Tass) — "Sweden and Russia have stable relations which are not clouded by anything," speaker of the Russian State Duma Gennadiy Seleznev said here on Thursday during a meeting with speaker of the Swedish Riksdag (parliament) Birgitta Dahl.

Seleznev heads a delegation of the lower house of the Russian parliament on an official visit in Sweden.

Sweden was a traditional partner of the USSR and is now a traditional partner of Russia, the speaker said. He expressed the hope that ties between the parliaments and governments of the two countries will soon become more intensive.

He thanked Swedish MP's for the assistance to Russia during its entry into the Council of Europe.

Before visiting the Swedish parliament, Seleznev laid a wreath at the tomb of prominent Swedish statesman and politician Olof Palme who was murdered by an assailant ten years ago.

Russia: Soskovets Discusses Caspian Pipeline With Omani Minister

LD0703121196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Mar 7 (Interfax) — First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets discussed the drafting of an agreement on the Caspian pipeline consortium with Oman's Economics Minister Ahmed Mekki [name and title as received] in Moscow on Thursday.

After the meeting, held behind closed doors, Soskovets instructed the Fuel and Energy Ministry to prepare the necessary documents for signing as soon as possible, and find compromises to settle the disputes before the Oman delegation leaves Moscow, government sources told Interfax.

The Caspian pipeline consortium was formed on June 17, 1992 between the governments of Kazakhstan and Oman for the purpose of building a pipeline from the Tenghiz oil field in western Kazakhstan to the Russian port of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea coast.

Russia signed a protocol on joining the agreement on the consortium in July, 1992, and its parliament ratified the document on July 30, 1993.

The parties concerned have been engaged in negotiations on the pipeline consortium for several years now. Initially 50 percent of the stock belonged to Oman; however the situation changed, and the financial percentages of the countries involved in implementing the project connected with the consortium were revised.

The general investment project was divided into 25 percent shares with the equal participation of Kazakhstan, Russia and Oman. The remaining share was reserved for international oil companies, such as Chevron of the United States, that had expressed a desire to take part in the construction of a pipeline from the Tenghiz oil field to oil terminals in Novorossiysk through Russia.

Russia: Yeltsin Plans Confederation With Belarus, Kazakhstan

LD0603144796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1409 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Tamara Zamyatina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 6 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin will announce a plan for confederation with Belarus and Kazakhstan this month, according to first deputy premier Oleg Soskovets.

"On the eve of the fifth anniversary of the nationwide referendum on the preservation of a single state the Russian President will make public an agreed plan of the movement towards a confederation which is planned to be signed by Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan", Soskovets told journalists on Wednesday.

The referendum on the preservation of the Soviet Union was held in March 1991 and a majority of the turnout backed the preservation of a single country. In December the country collapsed after a foiled coup against former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Soskovets said Yeltsin's political will to promote integration of some CIS countries will be a weighty argument in his election campaign.

Russia: Interpol President Addresses Russian Mafia

964F1348A Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 3 Feb 96 p 5

[Report by Anton Trofimov, under the rubric "Cooperation": "Interpol President Considers the Russian Mafia a 'Long-Range' Danger"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting was held yesterday at the Russian National Central Bureau [NCB] of the International Criminal Police Organization [ICPO] (Interpol) between the bureau staff and its president (also head of Sweden's State Police Directorate), Bjorn

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Eriksson, currently visiting Russia. As during the talks with the Russian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] leadership the day before, the topics were Interpol's affiliation with the United Nations in observer capacity, regional organization of its bureaus, and combating drug trafficking and money-laundering.

On the subject of regional cooperation, Bjorn Eriksson noted at the press conference that followed the meeting that each Interpol member country must find its own form for this cooperation. "We will not dictate what it will be," promised the ICPO chief. In his personal opinion, however, the most logical step for Russia would be to organize cooperation within the framework of the CIS (in this connection, he mentioned that he had already visited Ukraine and is planning to visit several Central Asia countries—CIS members).

The Interpol president is particularly concerned over the increasing transit of drugs through Russia and money-laundering. Currently, the traditional distribution markets for drugs already are saturated, and therefore the attention of dope producers has now concentrated on Russian consumers. Besides, in Mr. Eriksson's opinion, a new surge in transit of drugs should be expected in connection with the stabilization of the situation in the former Yugoslavia and Afghanistan—traditional drug-carrier routes. Therefore, Russian law enforcement agencies need to beef up their anti-drug-trafficking efforts, in which Interpol is ready to provide support whichever way it can. As to money-laundering, first of all, in the opinion of ICPO chief, Russia needs laws aimed at combating this evil. "You have to be aware, however, that even this does not completely eliminate the problem," he noted.

Answering a question about the Russian mafia, Bjorn Eriksson said that the problem of organized crime is very acute for Russia, but it would be an exaggeration to say that it presents a widespread problem for Europe. "It is true that former Russian citizens there are actively engaged in buying up real estate, money-laundering, and drug trafficking. However, this is most noticeable in Germany, England, and Austria, where it is easier to adapt from the standpoint of language and potential organizational development. The Russian mafia probably represents a long-range danger, but not in the immediate future, and Interpol is already working on it," said Mr. Eriksson.

This is the second visit of the high-ranking Interpol official to Russia this year: On 17 January, Raymond Kendall, general secretary of this organization, held a similar meeting. Quite possibly, this is linked with Russia's recent entry into the Council of Europe. Its members must be concerned over the state of crime-combating efforts in our country and the former USSR as a whole, and from this standpoint the Interpol bosses' visits look much more polite than direct pressure on Russia.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin, Zyuganov Discuss Law Reform Issues

LD0603191796 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Quotation marks denote recorded passages — from the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The brightest event in Moscow's political chronicles is the address by President Yeltsin at the all-Russia congress on legal reform. Yeltsin's speech had an overtly preelection character. The president predicted an exacerbation of the political struggle and made it clear that he intends to win the June elections. Here are the details in a report by Nikolay Nikolayev.

[Nikolayev] I intend to win in the presidential elections both to ensure that the legal reform begun in Russia is completed and that a return to a totalitarian regime is impossible. Boris Yeltsin said this in the Kremlin today when he gave recommendations to the all-Russia congress on legal reform. The president's speech abounded in preelection warnings on the intentions of irreconcilable fighters, named as those who strive to restore the system of soviets and those who call for a strong-arm regime.

[Yeltsin] "Dictators such as Franco, Pinochet, and so on, are often mentioned, with people saying that such regimes were able to speedily introduce law and order and ensure a calm and replete life. But everybody knows full well the price of such order, of such a repleteness. Moreover, in Spain and Chile and in other such countries right-wing democrats triumphed in the end. We can and we should achieve that, but not at the price of reaction and terror. We do not have the right to bring about another mass exodus from Russia by its sons and daughters for whom freedom is dearest of all."

[Nikolayev] Without going into details on how Russian legislation should be brought into line with international law, the head of state stressed that it is precisely this process which is recently becoming more topical, especially since our country was admitted to the Council of Europe. The president recalled that the previous Duma, despite the large number of sittings which were held, adopted just three constitutional laws. Now, the absence of the fundamental norms is leading to the exacerbation of internal contradictions in Russian legislation and that, in turn, is a feeding ground for various abuses and corruption.

Yeltsin devoted a substantial part of his speech to the drawn out reform of the judicial system and legal proceedings.

[Yeltsin, shown addressing congress] "The well-known principle of court decision on a specific case having the force of law is practically not being implemented. Things have gone so far that security subunits of certain organizations and enterprises, both private and state, do not allow officers of the court to carry out their duties. An essentially criminal mechanism is being created as a result. Seeing the ineffectiveness of court decisions, many prefer to have recourse to illegal means of returning lost property or of restoring the legal status which has been violated."

[Nikolayev] Gennadiy Zyuganov, the president's main rival in the forthcoming elections, was critical, to use the communist leader's words, of the late desire of the president to introduce law and order in the country. Zyuganov thinks that the reform which was announced, to the discussion of which Yeltsin decided to return at the height of the preelection race, is a still-born child. A completely new solution is necessary. Should he win in the elections, Zyuganov knows where he will begin lawmaking transformations.

[Zyuganov, in foyer interview to journalists] "The first step will be connected with a proposal for a new socio-economic course. The thrust of it is that it should be advantageous to work, regardless of the form of ownership. The law which is being adopted now is not being fulfilled through and through. To take presidential power, I propose the redistribution of powers — to strengthen executive power from presidential power."

[Nikolayev] Ending his address to those assembled in the Kremlin, Boris Yeltsin made it plain that the fate of future democratic transformations depended entirely upon the completion of the legal reform. The stronger democratic power, the president said, the more reliable laws will defend man and the state itself.

Nikolay Nikolayev, Ilya Mordukov, NTV television company.

Russia: Yeltsin's Remarks at Legal Issues Forum Detailed

MM0703113696 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA Weekend Edition in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Valentin Maslennikov under the "State and the Law" rubric: "The Word 'Law' [Pravo] Is Like the Word 'Truth [Pravda].' All-Russia Congress on Legal Questions Continued Its Work in Kremlin Yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin delivered a big speech to those who attended. He stressed that we will be able to say that we live in a rule-of-law state only when in our country the law is turned into a basic, vital principle. The law,

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the president stressed, must protect the weak and must make the strong more responsible. This is a complex and protracted process. Currently we are going through a difficult period when old legal mechanisms are no longer in operation and new ones have not been turned into a system. On this difficult path toward a rule-of-law state substantial transformations must be carried out in four main areas.

The first is the elaboration of a legislative strategy. We are passing new and necessary laws but this is being done slowly, lagging a long time behind life's imperatives. Normative creating rules and procedures have still not been developed and lobbying which is sometimes not disinterested is facilitating the passage of laws which are by no means of priority importance, putting vitally necessary normative acts on the back burner. We have by no means done all we can to ensure that the laws being passed conform fully to the norms of international law. It is necessary to speed up the systematization of our legislation and of course to ensure that all strata of the population have access to legal information. Legislators must pay special attention to elements in the normative acts which are being passed that contradict the Constituion and to other basic laws. Because these inconsistencies are a breeding ground for all kinds of abuses.

The second main area is judicial reform, the progress of which has been inexcusably delayed. There are many reasons for this but the main one is the ill-considered funding system. Another such mechanism is needed, and it is already being devised. But it is not enough to make the correct legal decision — it is important to ensure that it is implemented. In this context special importance is attached to the creation of the institution of bailiffs and the role and importance of the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice, under which the institution will operate, is being enhanced. But it is, of course, insufficient to rely only on this structure, the entire executive branch system must be improved. That is the third main area on the path toward a rule-of-law state. We need new laws on the Russian Federation Government, on the general principles governing the executive branch, and on mutual relations between the Federation and the regions; what is needed is comprehensive state control from top to bottom. Only then will all decisions, including legal ones, be implemented.

It is planned to gradually reform the justice organs, which will be moved from the periphery of the executive structures into the center. A new procedure for dealing with citizens' appeals is being worked out and a new administrative procedure code is being elaborated. These measures are designed to protect any citizen from officials' arbitrary actions and will ensure that bureaucrats are controlled.

Another essential condition for the transition to a rule-of-law state is the comprehensive legal education of the country's citizens. It must encompass the entire Russian population. It is every Russian's duty and obligation to know the legal system and laws and to strictly adhere to them in life.

"The stronger the authorities are," the president said at the end of his speech, "the more reliably the state will protect a person. I have put myself forward as a candidate for the post of head of state for another term in the hope of continuing the policy of reforms, whose aim is to build a true rule-of-law state."

Russia: Yeltsin Speech Seen as Declaration of War on Communism

MM0603152696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Vasiliy Kononenko: "Boris Yeltsin Has Defined the Basis of His Election Platform — Anticommunism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the first time since his decision to enter the fray to retain his presidential post, Boris Yeltsin has openly and even with a degree of aggression declared war on communist ideology and on those who are trying to bring it back into our lives.

Addressing the participants in the all-Russia congress on legal reform in the Kremlin 6 March, the president stated, in particular:

I intend to win the presidential election, among other things in order to bring legal reform to a successful conclusion. So that the horrors of tyranny and lawless mass repressions are never repeated, so that the law itself protects the weak and holds the strong accountable.

The democratic Russian state is still only at the stage of formation, yet the voices of those who deny the very ideas that form the basis of our Constitution can already be heard. And what do they propose instead? Nothing new. The campaigners for a return to the past make no secret of their intentions — that the presidency must be abolished, that the system of soviets will be revived, and that if the Constitutional Court interferes in this, they will deal with it.

In other words, the president went on, the objective is to revive a power structure under which the law will have to be well and truly forgotten. The country will once again have an omnipotent leader [vozhd] under cover of a so-called "collective leadership."

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Nonaccountable soviets will once again sit, controlled by party committees.

This is the logical conclusion of the program ideas of the force that is calling society back to yesterday. Others are calling for a "strong hand" regime to turn Russia into a police state, and they recall dictators like Franco and Pinochet. We have no right to permit ourselves yet another mass exodus from Russia by those of its sons and daughters who value freedom above all.

The president dwelt on the problem of the speediest creation of a legal base for the current reforms. He proposed the creation of a judicial department which would help ordinary workers to obtain funding for legal proceedings, and also the revival of the system of state control so as to make both the departments and the local authorities fulfill the laws and safeguard the individual against bureaucratic tyranny.

B. Yeltsin came back to the subject of the elections in the concluding part of his speech. He announced that in the event of his reelection he will ensure the continuation of legal reform.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Decrees on Terrorism, Land Ownership

LD0703111296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1036 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (Itar-Tass) — "Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed two important documents today — a decree on measures to intensify the fight against terrorism and a decree on constitutional guarantees of citizens' rights to land," the Russian president's press secretary Sergey Medvedev told the ITAR-TASS correspondent.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Edict on Postponing Regional Elections

MM0603165196 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 5 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Regions Get New Rights"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 2 March Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed an Edict "On the Procedure for Postponing Elections to Russian Federation Components' Legislative (Representative) Organs of State Power."

The document was prepared on the regions' initiative and develops Presidential Edict No. 951 of 17 September last year, which defines the procedure for holding elections to Russia's local legislative organs whose term of office expires in December 1996. Let us recall that the head of state's decision, based on Section 2, Article 80 of the Russian Federation Constitution, extended their term of office through December 1997. But in some regions, for instance Ivanovo, Kostroma, and Sverdlovsk Oblasts, legal proceedings disputing the legality of the extension of powers were instituted.

The new edict highlights and gives specific form to the Russian president's right in the sphere of extending the term of office of Russian Federation components' legislative organs and defines the mechanism for implementing the decision adopted; the date of the elections can be set within a particular Federation component.

The Russian Federation president's edict came into force the day it was signed and will be valid until the relevant law has been passed.

Russia: Yeltsin: Media Should Remain Calm During Elections

LD0603131196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1243 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 6 (Itar-Tass) — The mass media should act in a pacifying way in a stormy period of election campaigns when it is difficult for society and when political interests of many presidential candidates start clashing, President Boris Yeltsin said at a meeting with women in the Kremlin on Wednesday on the occasion of the March 8 holiday.

The president noted that he seeks to follow regularly news reports, reads all leading newspapers although not in detail. The Russian leader noted that he views mostly newsreels over television.

"I watch all TV channels but not very often. Have no time," Yeltsin noted. It was clear from his statements that the president prefers the "Vremya" programme among news broadcasts.

As for the NTV channel, according to Yeltsin, this TV company took the course for "milder information" in the recent past.

Russia: Duma Speaker Offers Yeltsin Deal on Presidency, Power

MK0703120196 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Dmitriy Volkov: "State Duma Chairman Proposes That the President Rule for Another Six Months"]

[FBIS Translated Text] State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev came up with a rather amusing idea at yesterday's press conference: If Boris Yeltsin proposes an

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amendment to the Constitution scrapping from 1997 the post of president, "many parties and movements" would, as if in exchange, "agree not to hold the election now" for new president. The proposal is in principle rather logical as heard from the lower house chairman who is guided by program documents of the party on whose ticket he was elected deputy: the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation]. Many prominent Communists speak for the abolition of the presidency in Russia. However, the overtures made to the current head of state have a rather unusual ring. After all, Boris Yeltsin has been throughout recent years strengthening the presidency, and virtually the entire Constitution is constructed around this institution. Thus, if Gennadiy Zyuganov wins the presidential election, the Communist Party leader would inherit very broad powers.

Supposing that Mr. Seleznev made this offer to Boris Yeltsin in earnest (rather he must have been joking), this actually gives Yeltsin additional six months to conduct a policy characterized by the Communists as "disintegration of the country." Since the Communists are convinced that the current regime is leading Russia to a national catastrophe, extending the course toward it for another six months appears rather shady. According to Mr. Seleznev's statement, all power in Russia passes to the State Duma elected last December, where the CPRF is generally in control, with Mr. Zyuganov being in control of the CPRF Duma faction. Thus, should Mr. Yeltsin accept the opportunity offered to him by Mr. Seleznev, Gennadiy Zyuganov could perhaps agree to wait six months, following which he would become almost absolute head of a parliamentary republic with no new elections until the year 2000. The Communists do not propose new elections for State Duma in 1997.

Had this offer attested to the Communists' not being sure of their strength, they would have hardly made it to the president via newspapers. It rather serves to prove that Mr. Seleznev does not see any difference between Mr. Zyuganov and Mr. Yeltsin, that he has no faith at all in Mr. Yeltsin's sincerity when the latter promises continuation of reforms and that Mr. Yeltsin's hunting for additional voters by taking over socialist ideas rather makes the Communists regard him as one of them, which prompts pensioners to turn away from the CPRF. Furthermore, the idea voiced by Mr. Seleznev certainly means that CPRF leaders themselves are prepared to accept power from any hands as long as they are offered a four-year warranty of the manufacturer. Still, Mr. Seleznev must have been joking after all.

Russia: Yeltsin Documents Not Received by Electoral Commission

LD0603203996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 6 (Interfax) — The Central Electoral Commission did not receive documents for Yeltsin's registration as a presidential candidate, Aleksandr Veshnyakov, a secretary of the commission, told Interfax.

He commented on a statement by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets, who said at a meeting with editors-in-chief of several Russian media Wednesday that the commission scheduled Yeltsin's registration as a presidential candidate for April 5.

According to Veshnyakov, if the commission receives such documents, it will consider them on a regular basis, like those of any other candidate.

He said the commission decides on a candidate's registration after he submits at least 1 million signatures in his support, a statement on his consent to run and an income statement for 1994-1995.

He recalled that, under the law on elections, the commission must check the lists with signatures and other documents required for registration within 10 days of their submission. "The Central Electoral Commission intends to check the lists with signatures for any presidential candidate thoroughly, as required by the law," said Veshnyakov.

Russia: Yeltsin's Rivals Skeptical of Roundtable Proposal

LD0603201596 Moscow NTV in Russian 2100 GMT 5 Mar 96

[From the "Today at Midnight" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The speaker of the lower chamber of parliament, Gennadiy Seleznev, was invited to the regular monthly audience with the president on Tuesday [5 March]. The legislative body Seleznev chairs has the largest number of potential candidates for the post of president, and this was one subject of conversation between the two politicians. The head of state shared his plans to assemble all his rivals for a roundtable to draw up an agreed code of ethics for conducting the election campaign.

At more or less the same time, Gennadiy Zyuganov, the leader of the Duma communists and like-thinker of Gennadiy Seleznev, was speaking at an expanded board of the Agrarian Party and expounding his own vision of the political prospects in the near future.

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[Begin Zyuganov recording] The special feature of these elections is that if we set ourselves the task of coming in first in the elections, we must bear in mind that one president will sow, and another will reap. Whatever happens, the structure of power must be changed, and changed very wisely, without destroying the very feeble branch of executive power which is failing to fulfill the simplest promises it has made. [end recording]

The revelations of the first officially-registered presidential candidate were in perceptible contrast to the wholly friendly tone of the president's initiative. It was with an equal degree of caution that both rivals competing for the leadership of the emergent coalition of the third force regarded the initiative [video of Aleksandr Lebed and Svyatoslav Fedorov]. They will only be able to take Yeltsin's broad gesture today as referring to them if they gather 1 million signatures from their supporters and so become his equal in the presidential race.

[Begin Duma Deputy Svyatoslav Fedorov recording] We can agree that if the platforms are the same, then the man who can carry out the platform best should be the one to carry the banner. There are no irreconciliables where common sense is victorious, and common sense, after all, is as a rule victorious in open discussion, where there is glasnost. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin Zyuganov recording — shown addressing Agrarians] Only the one who can manage to create a big coalition and gather the most allies will win, or come in first in the elections. We intend to set up a public state council from people who are known throughout the country and who are the most authoritative in their sphere of knowledge and who are leaders of the major political movements. [end recording]

[Begin Aleksandr Lebed, deputy leader of Congress of Russian Communities, recording] Well, what can the president propose at this meeting? — Lads, let's live amicably; let's not drag one another through the mud. Well, I'm an officer, from a good school, I don't need any lessons in how to behave decently.

The second thing he could offer might be official posts. I've been offered enough of those. I don't accept charity on Tuesdays, nor on any other days of the week. And I don't take part in mass meetings anyway. [end recording]

[Begin Svyatoslav Fedorov recording] I am without doubt always in favor of conducting an open discussion, especially on television. That is very good — everybody can see who is lying and who is speaking the truth. [end recording]

[Begin Zyuganov recording — at Agrarians' meeting] The one who comes in first at the finishing line at the elections will not get a prize, nor a free holiday in Sochi, nor the appropriate wreath of laurel. He, together with the team who wins, dons a crown of thorns and a huge burden of responsibility for the stabilization of the situation and the rebirth of his fatherland. [end recording]

Henceforth, every potential candidate for the top post will have to bear in mind the prospect of a preliminary visit to the Kremlin for a frank heart-to-heart with its incumbent, and an exchange of front-ranking experience. [passage omitted]

[Begin YaBLoko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy recording] The president's proposals regarding this roundtable, I reckon, are very suspicious, and a very bad sign. Because I recall the Treaty of Public Accord, which is cited in such cases, and that was an absurdity that ended in the war in Chechnya. I think there will be an awful lot of mud. The president sensed this, has evidently gathered fresh compromising material, and now has decided to assemble a roundtable on behavior and ethics. [end recording]

Russia: Soskovets Notes Yeltsin Campaign, Possible Grachev Dismissal

LD0603152696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1511 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Tamara Zamyatina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (Itar-Tass) — On April 5, the Central Electoral Commission will begin a procedure of registering Boris Yeltsin as a candidate running for the second term of presidency, first vice-premier Oleg Soskovets said at a meeting with editors-in-chief of the Russian mass media at the Itar-Tass news agency on Wednesday.

Soskovets has been in charge of Boris Yeltsin's election campaign on a voluntary basis.

At a meeting with the heads of the Russian media, Soskovets outlined the structure of the headquarters of the election campaign of the Russian president. Vice-premier Yuriy Yarov, who is on leave from his main job for the time of the election campaign, has been put in charge of the executive committee. A committee for support to Boris Yeltsin led by Sergey Filatov, the "Our Home is Russia" and "Reforms — New Course" movement led by Vladimir Shumeyko — all these structures, according to Soskovets, will merge in a single public coalition targeted at the preservation of reformatory power in Russia. Soskovets will coordinate the activities of this coalition.

Soskovets did not rule out that "he would have to go on leave for a month or 1.5 months in order not to

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worry the opposition, but only after the candidate was registered." Until then, Soskovets will do the job of a coordinator on a voluntary basis.

Commenting on the president's strong moves in the election campaign, Soskovets mentioned the fulfillment by the government of its commitments to repay overdue wages this month. "No matter how difficult the realisation of this task might be, the government will cope with it," Soskovets said. He did not rule out even partial sale of the Central Bank's currency reserves to repay outstanding debts in the social sector.

According to Soskovets, a tangible argument in favour of Yeltsin's election campaign is the president's political will to promote integration processes in the framework of several CIS states. "On the eve of the fifth anniversary of a nationwide referendum on the preservation of a single state (held in 1991 — Tass comment) the Russian president will make public a coordinated plan for the movement towards integration planned to be signed by Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan," Soskovets said.

Yeltsin intends to announce his initiatives in the run-up to the elections at a meeting with his fellow-thinkers to be held at the "Rossiya" concert hall in Moscow on March 22-23. The meeting will be attended by the president's supporters from all over Russia and the CIS countries. During the meeting, Yeltsin intends to outline his election platform "which would essentially differ from the text of the president's message to the Federal Assembly," Soskovets noted.

Referring to his experience of "a technological expert of "hot industries" Soskovets said that he would take advantage of this experience in the development and the realisation of the election "technology" of candidate Yeltsin. In this framework, certain work is expected to be carried out among all strata of the population, including participants in the Afghan war, people affected by the Chernobyl disaster, young people and leaders of centrist political forces.

Yeltsin's election campaign is expected to be promoted by the participation of his wife Naina Yeltsina, and his daughter Tatyana, whom Soskovets described as "clever and well familiar with her father's character."

Soskovets admitted that unlike other people in the president's entourage, he has to tell the president the truth about made errors, "although it would be easier to lie and praise."

"The worst burden which hampers the development of the election campaign with full confidence is the Chechen crisis," Soskovets said. He pointed out that Yeltsin had been increasingly often advised to give the names of real culprits to blame for the unwisely organized operation in Chechnya, including the latest "cleanup" in Sernovodsk.

In the context of the conversation it was made clear that the president had been insistently recommended to dismiss Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, and this point of view was backed by participants in today's meeting.

Russia: Kremlin Mailbag Shows Support for Yeltsin

MM0603165396 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 5 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "What People Are Writing to the Kremlin About"]

[FBIS Translated Text] ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI, with the help of the Russian Federation President's Administration for Citizens' Communications, continues to keep readers informed about letters from Russians on the upcoming election of the head of state.

The latest review of the mailbag on this topic, received by the editorial board [from the Administration], reports that 287 letters were received during the week from 57 components of the Federation. Most active were the inhabitants of six regions of the country (Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Moscow, and Rostov Oblasts and St. Petersburg), which accounted for one-half of the analyzed mail.

Commenting on the mail, the analysts from the Administration pick out three main attitudes.

The first is support for B.N. Yeltsin's running for a second presidential term. The writers include leaders of the Russian Party of European Liberalism organizing committee; the "People's Union for the Rebirth of Russia" party; the Union of Timber Industry Workers and Timber Exporters; the Union of Sugar Producers; the Russian Fund for Military Service Invalids; the Association of Medical and Pharmacological Higher Education Establishment Staff; the European-Siberian Financial and Industrial Group; the Interregional "Oil And Gas" Association; and the Krasnoyarsk Combine Harvester Plant; and the leaders of other public associations and enterprises in various forms of ownership. B.N. Yeltsin's decision to run for a second term gets the approval of correspondents abroad — Kyrgyzstan President A. Akayev and citizens of China, Israel, Ukraine, and Moldova.

Russians whose hopes for a better future are pinned solely on the incumbent Russian president include Armavir war veteran Khapov; 15 communications workers in Kurgan Oblast; a group of pensioners in Severo-Kurilsk; Air Force Museum worker E. Khachirashvili; and others. Doctor of Technical Sciences V. Yepifanova

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from Moscow writes: "I would very much like to see destiny act fairly and give you the chance to make the country more organized and less susceptible to being torn apart by opposition forces."

The second attitude is the opposition one (28 percent of the correspondence). The writers include working people at enterprises and in organizations where pay is regularly delayed, opponents of the waging of hostilities in Chechnya, investors duped by commercial structures, and pensioners.

Judging by the mail, the bulk of this group of writers comprises not supporters of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] or LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia], but rather the disenchanted, since they do not see any positive results of the reforms. Worker V. Shevtsov (Moscow Oblast), for example, writes: "I have always voted for you, but I won't this time. Because life for the ordinary man has not gotten better and there is not enough pay." Technical staff at Kashin City Court (17 signatures, Tver Oblast) do not believe that the entire pay debt will be discharged by the appointed time. Appeals organized by the Independent Trade Union Of Miners at the "Mezhdurechye" Joint-Stock Company (Kemerovo Oblast) see the pay debt as a violation of the human being's and citizen's constitutional right to remuneration for his labor. Serviceman G. Akulov from St. Petersburg warns: "Do not treat Zhirinovskiy lightly: If he manages to avoid any unfortunate escapades over these few months he could get a majority at the election."

The third group of communications (more than 20 percent) is from voters who say their election stance depends on the solution of the widest range of personal issues: From municipal housing and land to such matters as the assessment of the style and methods of work of organs of state power and their ability to organize and implement laws, presidential edicts, and government decrees, particularly on social and economic matters.

The letters report unusual "methods" of collecting signatures. E. Kirey writes from Krasnoyarsk Kray that signatures in support of Zhirinovskiy were being collected in a Shushenskoye bar in exchange for a free glass of vodka.

St. Petersburg entrepreneurs A. Solovyanov and Yu. Kuznetsov propose election campaigning targeted at believers not only Orthodox, but Muslims as well. A. Gavrilenko from Stavropol stresses the importance of "reaching everyone" in the countryside. B. Abramov from Novosibirsk Oblast proposed paying special attention to the leadership of veterans' organizations "conducting procommunist agitation" and instituting an oath for leaders of state management organs: local administration, social security organs, unemployment committees, and so on.

V. Neshchadin, who lives in the Cossack village of Petrovskaya in Krasnodar Kray, believes that a greater effort should be made to explain the aims and purpose of the reforms: "At the State Duma elections people voted not so much for the CPRF, LDPR, and so on as against the government. The reasons being low pay coupled with regular delays, the war in Chechnya, rising prices, and rising crime and unemployment. It is difficult to present counterarguments, but they must be found, I entreat you to do this. There is still time."

Calls on the "Voters' Direct Line," organized at the President's Staff, cover more or less the same topics.

Here is the number again: 206-34-55. Let us remind you that having called this number you will not only get answers to your questions about the upcoming elections, but also the chance to resolve your own specific everyday problems.

Russia: Zyuganov Answers Questions at Press Briefing

MM0603153496 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Valentina Nikiforova under the "Events and Comments" rubric: "Zyuganov Has a Good Team"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The people's patriotic forces bloc was the first to open up the second phase of the election campaign, nominating Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation], as its candidate for the post of Russian Federation president. He was officially registered by the Central Electoral Commission and received his certificate 4 March. He is the first of the presidential candidates.

A detail, and maybe not a "momentous" one, is that everything will be determined by the elections and settled by the people. But when Hero of Socialist Labor Vasiliy Starodubtsev; Agrarian Party leader Mikhail Lapshin, the very experienced organizer of rural life; Twice Hero of the Soviet Union Cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskaya; Viktor Zorkaltsev, the excellent organizer and manager who participated in the construction of the cities of Strezhevoy and Kedrovoye, and currently chairman of a State Duma committee; and graduate student Dasha Mitina, stood up in the press conference presidium next to G. Zyuganov, the hall of the Central House of Journalists, which has seen various heroes in its time, fell silent. And when Doctor of Historical Science Aleksey Podberezkin assumed the role of presenter of the press

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conference, quite honestly a fair few people said it will be interesting to work with this team!

Given that over 70,000 volunteers took part in the collection of signatures for the candidate, it is clear who is standing behind Zyuganov.

But that is all emotion. What is expected from a presidential candidate, especially one from the opposition, is specific answers to serious and even trifling questions. There were many of these but they can be reduced to three categories: How is the bloc taking shape and why have Anpilov and Baburin not signed the agreement; the diametrically opposed opinions that have formed about Zyuganov — is he a new broom, a reformer or the restorer of a bankrupt system, and indeed does he believe in communism; and the most serious questions concern methods of action if victory is won at the elections.

The answer should be short and to the point. And Zyuganov is looking for succinct words and concepts:

"The USSR and the CPSU suffered a defeat because they were monopolists on ownership and the superstructure. The ruling elite set the task of self-preservation, and it gave only itself the right to judge everything. The system collapsed, and this elite aged — everyone knows these 70-year old statesmen.

"We are in favor of a mixed system in the economy, a pluralist political superstructure because a monopoly on power leads to decay. We are in favor of freedom of speech, but not the kind of freedom of speech which makes it acceptable to wipe your feet on the red flag. Our fathers won freedom under this flag!"

"But nevertheless, what can society expect — nationalization?" the journalists inquired.

"No," the candidate answered. "We will be able to support the producers of foodstuffs and commodities by economic methods in order to feed the hungry and give jobs to all who want them. And there is no need to fear that the West will not provide credits. In all the five years of democratic rule, it has allocated $5 billion to us, while tiny Hungary received 30 billion. So we will have to survive on our own."

He spoke about communism. He recalled that this word means: public, collective, council-based [sobornyy]. We have been and still are collectivists. Our expanses and the dimensions of our state property mean that only collectivists can survive.

Well, these are good ideas. But why has a broad alliance nevertheless not been formed? What can be said? In a divided, misled society, strong personalities are the first to start seeking ways of saving the fatherland. Yes, G. Zyuganov admitted, there are strong personalities in other blocs: A. Lebed, A. Rutskoy, S. Govorukhin, Sv. Fedorov. But they have no structures. That is why we have announced that the agreement is open to everyone. As for Anpilov and Baburin, they are reflecting, and adjusting their position.

And it would be a good thing if they did not delay here. With them, Zyuganov's team will become stronger, and there is a worthy place for them in this team.

Russia: Yavlinskiy Interviewed on Political Credo, Goals

MM0603170796 Moscow TRUD in Russian 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, "Yabloko" leader and Russian presidential contender, by Olga Solomonova under the "Politics Reflected in Individuals" rubric; place and date not given: "Grigoriy Yavlinskiy: I Will Say Where the Money Is To Come From. 'Yabloko' Leader and Russian Federation Presidential Contender Answers TRUD Correspondent's Questions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have already reported that the list of possible presidential candidates now runs to several dozen people. They will launch their election campaigns only once they have obtained 1 million signatures in their support and have been officially registered. In the meantime, we decided to ask some of the people on this list to clarify their positions on questions of broad public interest. It ultimately matters to voters, worried by the fate of the reforms, whom they support with their signature.

[Solomonova] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, what exactly is the "Yabloko" association, what is its main idea? What does "Yabloko" advocate?

[Yavlinskiy] "Yabloko" contains people who politically uphold the most important things for Russia's development: citizens' well-being and the elimination of poverty. We advocate that the majority of Russian citizens become what is called middle class, we advocate peace and prosperity for all.

[Solomonova] What do you mean by middle class?

[Yavlinskiy] By today's standards, people who should have their own housing and car and the opportunity to take a vacation suiting their own taste once a year and have enough money to educate their children as they wish and to provide medical treatment for their parents wherever they think necessary. Our political goal is to secure that sort of living standard for the majority of Russian citizens — doctors, teachers, engineers, the military, designers, technologists, skilled workers,

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enterprising peasants. In other words, for people who nevertheless live on their wages.

[Solomonova] Why do you say nevertheless?

[Yavlinskiy] Because in our country the financial market is still very underdeveloped and no ordinary citizen can yet live on dividends. A considerable proportion of the country's population has gained nothing as a result of the reforms and has even lost out. Only a small group of people has gained any advantage. Our task is to adjust the reforms so that they become reforms for the majority. This is the aim of "Yabloko's" participation in both the parliamentary and the presidential elections.

[Solomonova] Lately you have been reproached for cooperating with the left-wingers, with the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation]. What does "Yabloko" have in common with the Communists?

[Yavlinskiy] We are not a communist party in any sense [vo vsekh smyslakh] because we advocate a regular change of government, a broad spectrum of private property in the economy, and human rights as a priority in our country. We advocate the inviolability of Russia's present borders, preservation of the main provisions of the constitution, and many other things that are unacceptable to the Communists.

Adjustment Or Change of Course?

[Solomonova] Many people believe, not without reason, that the Communists won the State Duma elections partly because the economic policy of recent years has not been vindicated. In voting Communist, people were not so much supporting them as protesting against the policy of reform implemented by the authorities. You said you are in favor of adjusting the reforms. Do you think it is possible to produce different political results by adjusting them?

[Yavlinskiy] What is needed is not merely an adjustment, but a change of course. To be still more precise, real reform instead of a mere semblance of reform. What goes by the name of reform in our country? First, there is a kind of privatization that does not create property-owners and yields nothing. The privatization of major enterprises has led to a redistribution of property among various monopoly groupings, often on a criminal basis.

Second, there are the attempts to reduce inflation. Not by economic means, but by technical means: by not paying wages and pensions. That is all our reforms are. The rest is merely embryonic. Even when the preconditions emerged for real steps, the government did not take them.

[Solomonova] What sort of preconditions?

[Yavlinskiy] For instance, when the population began to display an inclination to save, this should have been supported by simultaneously developing the financial market. Nothing was done; the population's savings disappeared into all sorts of private "pyramids" which subsequently went bankrupt.

The question arises: Is there any need at all for economic reforms that are bringing the country to the sort of political regime that abolishes everything these reforms have achieved?

I can easily picture our major reformers discussing animatedly in jail how they achieved 3-percent monthly inflation, but as a result of this major achievement the diehard opposition came to power.

[Solomonova] A gloomy prospect. What do you think should be done today?

[Yavlinskiy] Without real and gradual changes in the regions it is impossible to build a new economic system. We should begin with this. For instance, for an enterprise to be privatized, the social sphere should be hived off from it. In order to do this we should eliminate impersonal consumption funds and pay subsidies directly into workers' wages. This can be done when a labor market appears, and this, in its turn, depends on the housing market. Here is an entire chain formed merely on the basis of the direction of the reforms.

In addition, the state budget must also be geared to reform. After all, reforms are by no means a measure that can be implemented for free. But our last year's budget allocated less money for small business than it did for computers for State Duma deputies.

What is the point of reform? It is not to make life easier for deputies and functionaries. Is it any wonder people vote Communist? I believe that unless wages and pensions are paid now the Communists will come to power, and if on top of that the light, water, and gas supplies are turned off for people, Zhirinovskiy's bunch will come to power.

There are limits to everything. We must understand the link between economic reforms and their political consequence.

Breakthrough to Sources

[Solomonova] The president recently gave an assurance that all wage arrears would be paid in March.

[Yavlinskiy] It would be nice to know where he is going to get this money. If the money is there, why did they not pay sooner? Moreover, nobody knows what he is going to pay — arrears since 1992? For the past month? Or simply wages for March?

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[Solomonova] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, what would you do in a situation where there was no money, yet wages must be paid?

[Yavlinskiy] There is money in our country, and I will tell you where to get it.

The first source is taxes. They must be collected. If major oil, gas, metallurgical, and transport corporations in our country are not paying taxes, where is the money to pay doctors and teachers to come from?

The second source is to stop fighting in Chechnya. A country cannot wage a serious war without incurring great expenditure.

The third source is our government. Its size and way of life are quite fantastic. Until such time as Russia has a modest government the country will always be short of money.

There is also a fourth source — the money that today goes abroad both illegally and quite officially. And it will continue to go abroad because anyone who has earned a decent amount of money is afraid it will be confiscated tomorrow. Perhaps the Communists will come along and nationalize everything, or the minister of internal affairs will have another brainstorm....

If all these sources were used for the country's domestic development for a year, there would be a real breakthrough.

[Solomonova] What do you think should be done with the fruits of privatization, which you said has given nothing to the majority of people? Should they be abolished?

[Yavlinskiy] No. Ownership rights must be protected, and no exceptions can be made here. Yes, there was much that was unfair and there were many abuses in the course of privatization. But if we now try to change all this by administrative or strong-arm methods, it will be far worse. The point of the work lies elsewhere. The first thing is to create economic conditions that will compel negligent, unskilled property-owners to give up their property and make competent people receive the opportunity to control and gain possession of it. The second thing is the creation of a stable political atmosphere that will permit people to feel no fear of investing their money in Russia. These two factors alone would lead to a substantial redistribution of property....

[Solomonova] You seem to have a good idea what you will do if you win the presidential elections. But why do most analysts assert that only Boris Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov can reach the second round?

[Yavlinskiy] That probably says more about the analysts than about the candidates. Their polls say one thing, they themselves say another, but the voters will decide.

[Solomonova] But will democratic forces be able to unite before the elections? Why were the Communists able swiftly to reach agreement and nominate a single candidate when this is so difficult for you reformers?

[Yavlinskiy] Everything is arranged quite differently among the Communists: The Politburo decides, and that is the end of the matter. But the democrats too — the democrats in the broad sense of the word — will have a single candidate. I am talking about the noncommunist forces, about the people who believe that the Communist Party's advent in power would pose an extreme danger to the country.

Where Is This Single Candidate?

[Solomonova] What forces do you want to unite?

[Yavlinskiy] I want to unite not "forces" but voters. Both those who voted Communist — in favor of a modest degree of prosperity — and those who voted for Yeltsin, in order to ensure that things do not get any worse. There are the people who voted for General Lebed, for Svyatoslav Fedorov, for "Yabloko," and for the small democratic parties. Together they are far more numerous than those who voted for the CPRF leadership. And if you also bear in mind the effect of unification, there would be even more of them. The interests of all these people are very close to our hearts, and we will certainly be able to satisfy them without coups and revolutions. Via professional, honest work.

[Solomonova] So you are negotiating with Gaydar, Pamfilova, Fedorov, Lebed...

[Yavlinskiy] ...With everyone who is not an orthodox Communist and does not support Yeltsin or Zhirinovskiy....

[Solomonova] Many democrats accuse you, Grigoriy Alekseyevich, of excessive ambition, saying that you will never give up your leadership to any common candidate.

[Yavlinskiy] Before giving anything up or not, it would be nice to know: To whom?

[Solomonova] To Boris Nemtsov, say.

[Yavlinskiy] I am prepared to support Nemtsov if he agrees to run.

[Solomonova] Naturally, when Nemtsov has categorically refused to run you can calmly speak of support for him.

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[Yavlinskiy] I had a very long and thorough conversation with Boris Nemtsov and said I am prepared to work with him in any capacity. I am prepared to support any candidate from the noncommunist forces whose chances of winning are greater than my own. It is simply that I find it easier to talk about Nemtsov because he is someone I trust politically. After all, presidential elections are not a matter of love or sympathy. As one close friend of mine says: If you love someone send them flowers or chocolate. But you cannot be guided by this when choosing a president. Here the most suitable criterion is the one you use when choosing a doctor for your child.

[Solomonova] If citizens are to make a conscious choice of president, they must above all have a clear idea of what can be expected of each candidate. So far that kind of clarity probably exists only with respect to the Communist leader. Perhaps the democrats are rightly criticized for not being able to set out their ideas simply and clearly?

[Yavlinskiy] That is partly true. But there is also an objective difficulty — the democratic movement has been discredited over the last four years. Unfortunately, nowadays people associate war, corruption, lawlessness, and the nonpayment of wages and pensions with democracy. We say: Do not believe it, in fact democracy is very different from the way you imagine.

[Solomonova] Nevertheless, if it comes down to a choice between Yeltsin and Zyuganov, who do you think is preferable?

[Yavlinskiy] I see no particular difference between them. Do you remember how enthusiastic people were five years ago? I don't think they are protesting today only because of the difficulties in the reforms. No, our people are prepared to understand difficulties and to forgive the president many mistakes, but not bloodshed and the total uncertainty over our children's future.

[Solomonova] There are many politicians in our country who advocate ending the war in Chechnya. Nevertheless, it continues. What solution do you propose?

[Yavlinskiy] We should not seek magic solutions now. There are none. There is just one task here — stopping the killing of our citizens. This determines the solution — skillfully withdrawing troops from Chechnya. And then, after a while, holding a referendum there.

Grudges and Popularity Ratings

[Solomonova] Yegor Gaydar said recently that he could support you, but only on certain conditions.

[Yavlinskiy] We are actively explaining our position on all these matters. I think success is possible.

[Solomonova] Last summer, when "Democratic Choice" and others suggested uniting to you, you turned them down, and now they are in no hurry to join the coalition you are proposing. Maybe you should really have united back in the summer and not annoyed your future allies?

[Yavlinskiy] We had and still have fundamental disagreements on a number of key economic matters. They were of fundamental importance to the Duma elections, and we could not deceive our voters. But the presidential elections raise the question of the political regime in the country. And there are no disagreements about this. I hope the grudges will fade into the background in the face of the threat of political defeat.

Now a few words about a single candidate. Why did the Communists nominate Zyuganov and not Anpilov, say? Because they stick to the facts — the results of the Duma elections. These elections were essentially the most reliable of opinion polls.

[Solomonova] But if we base ourselves on the election results, is the upshot that Zyuganov and Zhirinovskiy will get through to the second round?

[Yavlinskiy] If we are unable to unite all noncommunist forces, including democratic forces, that is very probable. I am deeply convinced that the majority of citizens in no circumstances want our country to have a Communist president, but also cannot countenance everything remaining as it is. The majority are not for Zyuganov, but they are not for Yeltsin either. So on behalf of these people we are offering a real choice and a new policy and we are asking: Aren't you fed up with choosing between a greater and a lesser evil?

[Solomonova] Let us picture your potential voter, who supports neither the Communists nor Zhirinovskiy's party. He thinks: Yes, Yavlinskiy is a smart guy, likable, and fairly young, but who knows what he would do when he came to power?.. The voter may not like the current president, but he is at least familiar, and the unknown always involves risk. Is that not so?

[Yavlinskiy] There is no greater risk than leaving everything as it is....

Russia: 'Third Force' Bloc Seen Having No Chance in Election

MK0703090396 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Natalya Arkhangelskaya: "A New Horse-Trading Center — 'Third Force' — Has Opened"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The press conference by the center-left Third Force bloc, scheduled for Tuesday [5 March], where it was going to announce Aleksandr

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Rutskoy's accession to it, did not take place. The declaration of the creation of the bloc itself, as is known, was signed two weeks ago by eye doctor Svyatoslav Fedorov, economist Sergey Glazyev, film director Stanislav Govorukhin, Russian People's Union Chairman Sergey Baburin, General Aleksandr Lebed, and others. At that point things got stuck, however. Indications are that the bloc was created not to contest the upcoming elections, but with other, more pragmatic purposes.

Strictly speaking there is already a "third force" in Russia: Zhirinovskiy's LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia]. True, it has visibly weakened since previous elections, but this does not at all mean that this niche can be occupied by somebody else. Decline in the LDPR's popularity has objective rather than subjective reasons. The December elections showed that the electorate's demand for a "third force" today is narrowing, and that the country is beginning to gravitate toward bipolar politics. By virtue of this, attempts to, at the same time, distance itself from Communist traditionalists and right-wing reformers are doomed. Unless, that is, lying behind these attempts is the quite understandable wish by a number of not-very-successful politicians to sell themselves as expensively as possible to whoever is willing to buy. This is in fact what we are seeing in the case of the "Third Force" election union.

The most active organizers of center-left forces are third-rate politicians — Oleg Rumyantsev, Andrey Golovin, and Konstantin Zatulin — who lost the December elections and are now seeking to get at least something out of the June elections. Another person who belongs here is economist Sergey Glazyev, who also failed to get a deputy's mandate, but who did not dare to openly side with the Communist bloc with which he has long been cooperating covertly (it is generally known that he helped the CPRF, which is not rich in experts, to write the economic part of its program). Film director and Duma deputy Stanislav Govorukhin, who in his time made the anti-Communist film, "The Russia We Have Lost," is also hard put to openly stand under Zyuganov's banner — although rumor has it that in the event of success in the elections he was promised the post of culture minister. Anxious to save face, he is, for the time being, keeping low in the Third Force bloc.

The Russian People's Union Chairman Sergey Baburin, who has already secured the comfortable chair of deputy Duma speaker, apparently wants something more weighty. Therefore he hangs out with both the Zyuganovites and the center-leftists. According to some reports, Baburin did not sign the Zyuganovites' accord on Monday only because his claims to the post of deputy premier for himself and three ministerial posts for his associates were rejected.

Signs are that the hopes that center-left bloc organizers are pinning on Aleksandr Rutskoy are not destined to materialize. Informed sources say that the former deputy president turned-Lefortovo-prison-inmate, who at a conference of united opposition in Kaliningrad (summer 1994) was called its most promising candidate, today would like to forget his enmity with Yeltsin and retreat from the Moscow hustle. By way of compensation he would settle for a governorship on his home turf (Kursk Oblast), where elections are due in December, which it would be only reasonable [for him] to contest with Moscow's neutrality. People who know Rutskoy say that he could also agree to another post — head of the Rosvooruzheniye state company for instance — if only Yeltsin, too, would forget his grudge....

Eye surgeon Svyatoslav Fedorov — although he put his signature onto the declaration of the creation of the center-left bloc — was, in so doing, hardly guided by ideological considerations. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain his appearance at a rally of democratic leaders under Filatov's auspices where the two politicians he dislikes the most — Gaydar and Chubays — were present. Incidentally, Fedorov also promised to sign the democrats' final declaration. To all appearances, he soberly assesses his chances of becoming Russian president while his "playing on two fronts" is nothing more than a method of horse trading with the establishment. The eye doctor has basically one complaint to make against the latter: He was not allowed to privatize his eye microsurgery center according to the scheme he favored. In the upcoming June contest he will certainly take the side of whoever promises to help him realize his dream.

It is also clear what motivated the main signatory to the center-left declaration: General Aleksandr Lebed. In the past year the politically inexperienced general has made so many mistakes that he has, in effect, destroyed what initially seemed to be a pretty good chance of winning the position of head of state. Today, left without any money, team, and almost no prospects, he is looking for a fulcrum. The top prize is effectively out of reach, and the best he can do in this situation is to put a price tag on himself for both the opposition and the establishment, which maintains continuous contacts with him. Yet, informed people say, the general — who has not as yet fully mastered the basics of political art — is not able to do this coherently. Yet there is still time.

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Russia: Chernomyrdin Says Wage Debt Reduced in Mar

LD0703135896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1326 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 7 (Itar-Tass) — "The wage debt, primarily the one connected with the federal budget, began to reduce at last," Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said today, opening a meeting of the government, devoted to the problem of bringing down non-payments, including wage debts.

Speaking about the root causes of this negative phenomenon, Chernomyrdin mentioned the emergence and accumulation of delays with wage payments, the production of goods which cannot stand competition, a poor knowledge of the market situation and incompetence of managers of debtor enterprises in the sphere of finances, a shortage of circulating assets, high interest rates for credits, sluggish price and tax policy. In his opinion, the fact that the bankruptcy procedure was not applied to those enterprises which repeatedly failed to meet their commitments before workers and before the budget, as well as impermissible delays with the passage of payment documents through commercial banks also contributed to the non-payment of wages and the worsening of tension in society. The transition of many enterprises to payments in kind, insufficient financing from budgets on all levels and the use of budget allocations in a way other than intended are also directly connected with non-payments.

Chernomyrdin said that he had conferred with senior officials of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy on February 28. They had discussed the payment of the wage debt and the mobilisation of revenues to the federal budget. Today he suggested that the heads of those ministries and the Central Bank report on what had been done by them during the period under review.

The problem of non-payments and wage debts is "one of the most acute and important problems for the government," the Prime Minister stressed. Time limits should be set for their solution. "We shall work on it every day, in order to bring the situation back to normal in March," Chernomyrdin said.

According to the State Committee for Statistics, a total wage debt amounted to 23 trillion roubles at the end of February (16 per cent up against the previous month), and the number of enterprises and institutions with wage debts reached 82,000 (a growth by 120 per cent against January this year). Inspections, conducted in January and February, showed that 1,500 enterprises and institutions were violating the law on the payment of wages.

Russia: Communists' Seek Control Over Duma Staff

964F1353A Moscow KURANTY in Russian 28 Feb 96 p 4

[Article by Aleksandr Sadchikov: "A Red Deputy Will Come—He Will Change the Apparatus: The Communists Are Trying To Transform Parliament Into Their Own Preelection Headquarters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In all times bureaucrats have not been liked in Russia. At the beginning of perestroyka the party and then the soviet bureaucracy caught hell, and now the state bureaucratic apparatus is catching hell. But despite the abuse of the press and society and all possible kinds of reductions and reorganizations, the apparatchiks have not only always contrived to preserve their positions but frequently also to receive benefits. In any fight with the apparatus it was the bureaucrat who invariably celebrated victory, not society.

The reason for this does not lie in the omnipotence of government service people, but rather in their professionalism and their natural apolitical ability to adapt to any authority. But when politicians try to adapt the bureaucrats to their own needs, the matter ends poorly, and it is in this that the communist majority in the State Duma is now engaged.

While the apparatuses of the government or the administration of the president on the whole constitute a single organism, their Duma analogue is heterogeneous. Ivan Rybkin, speaker of the former State Duma, compared it with a layer cake. The entire Duma government service class can be divided into two parts—those who came with the deputies and those who are employees of the central, all-Duma—apparatus. The assistants to deputies and the employees of the apparatus of one or another faction or group most of all belong to the first category. According to the regulations, each of the 450 Duma members have the right to three paid (staff) assistants and an unlimited number of volunteer public service assistants (for comparison—a member of the U.S. House of Representatives can have 18 staff assistants, and a senator—up to 30). The past elections showed that the position of this category of Duma bureaucrats is not very firm. The fate of an assistant depends directly on the success of his chief in elections. If he fails, be so kind as to turn in your certification papers and give up all possible benefits of the free public transportation type.

The same fate awaits employees of factional apparatuses. There were 12 factions in the previous Duma, in

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each of which 12-15 people worked. Four electoral associations got into the Sixth Duma on party lists, and three deputy groups were organized after the start of parliament's work. It is logical that the parties and movements that did not end up in the State Duma must vacate premises in the building on Okhotnyy Ryad together with their employees.

It is another matter when it comes to the employees of Duma committees or the bureaucrats of the central part of the apparatus (which consists of three administrations and several branches). It is exactly to these people that the private rule applies: The deputy comes and goes—the bureaucrat remains. He remains not because of someone's whim, but because he is a specialist, a professional in the field of lawmaking. Moreover, no one has the right to dismiss these people formally—the Labor Law Code does not allow it. However, a situation is now unfolding within the walls of the Duma that is far from complying with the norms of labor legislation: As was also bequeathed by Ilich to his successors, the communist majority of the State Duma is unequivocally trying either to fully subordinate "ideologically alien specialists" to itself, or to get rid of them as such, if not by the method of revolutionary terror, then by making things unbearable for them. There is nothing surprising here; after all, in order to assure their candidate victory in the presidential elections, the Communists need a complaisant and loyal Duma apparatus.

The appointment of a new chief of the Duma apparatus can be considered one of the first steps in this direction—instead of the appointment of Andrey Voykov from the president's administration to this post, Nikolay Troshkin, who is loyal to all the manipulations of the Zyuganovites, was appointed. It went from bad to worse. All kinds of personnel perturbations have already been started right in the committees. Examples? By all means. Anatoliy Lukyanov, head of the Committee on Legislation and Judicial Reform, who gained experience in all kinds of parliamentary intrigues, all of a sudden subordinated the entire apparatus of the committee to himself personally, and not to the leaders of the subcommittees as was the case in the last Duma. It would seem that it does not matter to whom an ordinary expert of this committee is subordinated. But no, now the former chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet can in his own committee block the work on an draft law that he personally does not take a fancy to, and, on the contrary, direct the preparation of a law that is being lobbied by the Communists. The decision would seem to be even trifling, but the advantages are tangible.

But while Comrade Lukyanov as an experienced specialist in Duma stratagems prefers such outflanking maneuvers, his colleagues in the faction operate openly, with party directness. Some of the apparatchiks of the Committee on Women's Affairs, Families, and Youth complained that its chairman, Alevtina Aparina, an old Bolshevik, is simply conducting a political purge in this Duma subunit—she is unceremoniously replacing professional servants with politically reliable ones.

There were 23 committees in the former Duma, and in the Sixth—28, of which nine are controlled by the Communists. To the already existing committees were added the ones that were just established. But who is being picked for them? Of course, activists of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation], so that, receiving a salary from the state, and after setting themselves up comfortably in Duma offices and driving around in official cars, they could thereby fight against the state. It is worth mentioning that the Communists are not simply in opposition to the current "party in power." They have declared more than once that after winning in the elections they will break up the system of power itself (they will abolish the institution of the presidency and revive the soviets). Nevertheless, they are using the State Duma as part of this system of power with maximum effectiveness. If it is necessary to set up activists, but the staff positions of employees of the CPRF faction are already filled, why not make good use of the Committee for Veterans Affairs, since its chairman is General Varennikov, or the Committee on Education and Science, whose chief is their own Ivan Melnikov. At worst even the Committee for Tourism and Sports, which is also headed by a Communist, Aleksandr Sokolov, will serve this purpose.

In the previous Duma the Committee on Regulations and Organization of Work of the State Duma, which was headed by Vladimir Bauer, who fell out with Russia's Choice, served as a reliable guarantor against the ideologization of the parliamentary apparatus. On the one hand, it did not permit the apparatus to dictate its conditions to parliament, and on the other hand, it protected bureaucrats from the intrigues of some members of the Duma. In the Sixth Duma the Committee for Organizational Work was headed by Dmitriy Krasnikov, who was dispatched there by the Communists to maintain the strength of the friendly Agrarians. According to the comments of knowledgeable people, this committee now not only will not begin to suppress the emerging trend, but, on the contrary, will be the "nuts and bolts" in the matter of the fight to increase its comrades-in-arms within the Duma walls.

Incidentally, it is not out of place to mention that Gennadiy Seleznev more than once made known the need to reduce the Duma apparatus by 150-170 persons. There is probably no need to explain whom these reductions will affect—those who at one time declared

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their disloyalty to the Communists. Mention should also be made of the new speaker's idea to make the State Duma a legal entity—in this way the Communists will have more independence in resolving material questions and less dependence on the president's administration of affairs. It is probably no accident that the bureaucrats themselves are more and more frequently calling the building on Okhotnyy Ryad the preelection headquarters of the CPRF. The Zyuganovites are taking it over and settling in at such a rate that soon they will be able to say with complete confidence: "The State Duma Is Our Home."

Russia: Data on 1995 Economic Crime Released

MM0603154396 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA ("Business Tuesday" section) in Russian 5 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by Stepan Tyulkov based on Ministry of Internal Affairs report: "Counterfeit Rubles Out of Fashion in the Crime World"]

[FBIS Translated Text]

Dynamics of Certain Categories of Economic Crime (Thousands)

	1994	1995
Misappropriation of property	34.9	35.5
Theft by deception	14.5	24.4
Counterfeiting	14.9	9.9
Illegal deals involving currency assets *	9.4	13.4
Official crimes	16.5	14.2
Of which are bribery	4.9	4.9

* (Footnote) Prior to July 1994 — Violations of regulations governing currency operations)

Thus, internal affairs organs detected 139,800 economic crimes, which pose an increased threat to the country's economic security, up 12.5 percent on 1994. It is easier to keep quiet about the less important crimes than to analyze the full range. Misappropriation of property represented the largest category of economic crime. To put it in Russian terms, people are thieving. There are also plenty of official crimes, which is also quite in keeping with Russian traditions. There has been a dramatic increase (up by a factor of 1.4) in the number of crimes in the sphere of banking, credit and finance, and currency circulation. The theft of 255 kg of gold from the Priokskiy nonferrous metal plant is an example of a major case in this sphere, in respect of which proceedings have been instituted against 67 people.

A one-third reduction in counterfeiting is one of the relative successes in the fight against crime — the report stresses that our money has improved slightly in quality, there is more technology available, and explanatory work has been carried out. We think that money specialists are tired of trying to keep up with inflation and the brighter ones have moved on to producing counterfeit dollars. Of which over 6,000 bills have been removed from circulation in the past year. And one criminal group in Chelyabinsk and Moscow alone was found with around 100,000 counterfeit dollars!

The situation involving the smuggling of strategic semimanufactures and raw materials has stabilized. Almost twice as many of these crimes were cleared up as in 1994 and the export of raw materials and semimanufactures worth 259 billion rubles [R] was averted. In Kaluga Oblast titanium pipes (R1 billion) were stolen, nickel-bearing components were misappropriated in Yekaterinburg (R3.2 Billion), and a transnational group exported nickel and slurry containing precious metals from Monchegorsk's "Severonikel" combine.... Naturally, with illegal operations on such a scale criminals did not skimp on bribes: A group of corrupt high-ranking officials in the North-West Administration of the Russian Federation State Customs Committee has been exposed, whose bribe-taking topped $300,000. Internal affairs organs prevented Ministry of Fuel and Energy officials receiving $15,000 for an oil export quota worth $153 million....

For the drinkers among you: In the past year over 2,000 illicit workshops manufacturing alcohol substitutes have

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been shut down and over 600,000 dekaliters of bootleg alcohol (or in simpler terms, [600,000] cases of half-liter bottles of vodka) have been confiscated. Be vigilant!

Structure of Economic Crimes (Mandatory Investigation) in 1995 (in percentages)

Official crimes	10.2
Counterfeiting	7.1
Illegal currency deals	9.8
Bribery	3.5
Misappropriation of property	25.4
Large-scale misappropriation of property	3.7
Consumer fraud	4.9
Illegal enterprise in the trade sphere	3.5
Other crimes	39.3
[all percentages as published — total equals 107.4 percent!]	

Media Issues

Russia: Public TV's 'Vremya' News Program To Be Revamped

LD0603193596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1344 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Ivanova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (Itar-Tass) — From 11 March, "Vremya", the main news program on television's First Channel [ORT], will appear in a revamped form. Kseniya Ponomareva, chief producer of Russian Public Television's news programs, said in an interview for ITAR-TASS today that the "Vremya" program will be structured in accordance with a new principle and will have a more lively rhythm. The image of "Vremya" will be changed: it will be broadcast from a studio which has been especially prepared for it. Arina Sharapova will be its presenter.

Kseniya Ponomareva said that the debut of the revamped "Vremya" is the "first swallow" of the radical restructuring of Russian Public Television's whole block of information programs. In particular, it is planned to create a fundamentally new weekly news and analysis program.

She added that the reorganization of the block of news programs has been achieved without any radical personnel changes, as the people working on these programs are unique and professional."

Russia: Kobzon Wins Defamation Case Against Newspaper

MM0703122296 Moscow TRUD in Russian 7-15 Mar 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Kobzon Versus SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Savelovskiy Intermunicipal Court in Moscow has upheld [singer] Iosif Kobzon's "defense of honor and dignity" case against the newspaper SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA and journalist Larisa Kislinskaya. The course issued its decision in absentia, without the presence of a representative of the newspaper and the author of the article "Under the Patronage of O.V." published by SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA at the end of 1992. The court ordered the defendants to pay Iosif Kobzon compensatory damages of 10 million and 5 million rubles respectively.

In the court Iosif Kobzon disputed the correctness of a report by the author of the article concerning his "personal contacts with the mafia and involvement in the release from detention of well-known 'crime bosses' Vyacheslav Ivanovich, known as Yaponchik, and Viktor Nikiforov, known as Kalin and Petrik. [no closing quotemarks as published]

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Russia: NEWSWEEK, MOST Group Launch Weekly Magazine ITOGI

MK0703115496 Moscow THE MOSCOW TIMES in English 7 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Sophia Coudenhove: "News Giants to Launch Magazine"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] NEWSWEEK magazine and Russia's MOST Group, which backs the SEGODNYA newspaper, NTV independent television and Ekho Moskvy radio, have joined forces to launch a new weekly magazine to be called ITOGI.

"We have the commercial and the editorial strength to make it a success," Richard Smith, Chairman of the Newsweek Group, announced at a press conference Wednesday [6 March].

ITOGI, named after NTV's popular news program, will be launched March 18, and after a two week gap will appear every Monday in 80 color pages. "We're building a bridge between the extremely influential program 'Itogi' here and the extremely influential magazine NEWSWEEK there," said the magazine's editor, Sergey Parkhomenko, making a pun on the name MOST, which is Russian for "bridge." "We want to be similar to 'Itogi' as well as to NEWSWEEK."

ITOGI will have exclusive rights to 12 pages of NEWSWEEK material in every issue, Parkhomenko said.

Initially priced at 25 cents per copy it will have a starting print run of 50,000 copies, which its leaders hope to double by the end of the year. The new magazine will employ about 40 full-time reporters, and rely heavily on cooperation from the daily SEGODNYA and the "Itogi" television program, Parkhomenko said, adding that Yevgeniy Kiselev, host to NTV's "Itogi," will write a regular column in the new magazine.

ITOGI journalists will be made to sign a document stating that they are free from political or commercial prejudices, Parkhomenko said.

"Aggressive, fair and accurate reporting come first and interpretation and analysis flow from that reporting," said NEWSWEEK's Smith. "If we did not believe that Sergey Parkhomenko and NEWSWEEK shared the same commitment to aggressive and accurate reporting I would not be sitting here today." Parkhomenko and Smith said the magazine's launch had been specifically planned to coincide with the campaign for the June 16 presidential election.

"I certainly recognize that his is a period of intense political change and political activity," Smith said. "At this moment people desire the best and most unbiased political coverage."

MOST Chairman Vladimir Gusinskiy and Smith refused to name a dollar figure for the initial investment in the paper. While Gusinskiy said MOST Group had made 100 percent of the investment, Smith was more elusive.

"There are commitments and there are resources from both sides. And if that says finances to you, you may or may not be right," he said. "Again, I would stress that these are long-term commitments on both sides." [passage omitted]

Military Issues

Russia: Army Said Ready To Re-Embrace 'Communist Ideology'

MM0603160596 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Viktor Sokirko under the "Prediction" rubric: "Army Hankering After the Days of the Political Officer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The most popular joke at the Defense Ministry since the Duma elections goes like this: "Comrade Colonel, when did you last pay your party dues?" The joke is particularly effective if told by a former party organizer....

Jokes are all very well but when I asked an officer friend how long it would take to revive the former Main Military-Political Directorate of the USSR Armed Forces from within the present GUVR (Russian Defense Ministry Main Directorate for Educational Work), he replied without hesitation: "Just a few minutes!" History could be reversed by a stroke of the pen: All the old cadres still exist, they have simply been renamed educators. Admittedly the "sword of retribution" in the form of party committees and party commissions has disappeared but that matter can be rectified.

Strange as it may seem, the Army is ready to return to the bosom of communist ideology. "At least there was order before and a commander who overstepped the mark could be called to order at the party committee. The fear of a party reprimand kept many people in check" said the officer, who in the years of "stagnation" savagely criticized all political workers and was in constant conflict with the regiment's political officer.

No one has stepped in to fill the ideological vacuum left in the Army since Article 6 of the Constitution was revoked and the institution of political workers was abolished — neither the priests nor the psychologists. But nature, as we know, abhors a vacuum. It is not

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surprising that the new Zyuganovite Communists are paying extremely close attention to the Army. It is no coincidence that Gennadiy Zyuganov was spotted together with [State Duma] Speaker Seleznev at a ceremonial meeting to mark Defenders of the Fatherland Day.

The GUVR now has around 100 political officers in its ranks. There are around a further 200 vacancies — are they destined for the future party commissions and committees of the All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League?

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Condemns U.S. Attempts To Stiffen Sanctions on Cuba

LD0603195096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (INTERFAX) — The Russian State Duma in a statement on Wednesday spoke of its "categoric disagreement with U.S. attempts to use the recent incident in air space of the Cuban coast to fuel a hysteria campaign against Cuba" and push through the Helms-Burton law on tighter economic sanctions against that country.

The Duma expressed regret over the tragic incident leading to loss of life, but also a belief that an unbiased international investigation was needed into the circumstances surrounding it.

The statement says "the rush with which Washington announced plans, even before such an investigation is held, to stiffen the economic blockade of Cuba gives grounds to suggest that deliberate provocation lies behind the incident."

The Duma reaffirmed its assessments of last May and October that the Helms-Burton law was in breach of widely recognized norms of international law. It said U.S. plans to adopt a law imposing provisions of U.S. legislation on other countries was particularly worrying. The Duma said such conduct in the international arena was unacceptable.

The statement underlines that like many other countries, Russia would continue to develop trade and economic links with Cuba proceeding from its national interests and "will never allow third countries to meddle in Russian-Cuban relations."

It says the Duma will consider retaliatory measures if "U.S. actions aimed at stiffening economic sanctions against Cuba will damage Russia's economic interests."

The Duma expressed the hope that sensible and civilized approaches would prevail in respect of U.S.-Cuba relations and "the odious Helms-Burton bill will not be made into law."

The statement was approved in a vote of 291 in favor to two against and one abstention.

Russia: Duma Summons Defense, Interior Ministers on Chechnya

LD0603152396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1306 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 6 (INTERFAX) — The State Duma voted on Wednesday to summon the ministers of defense and the interior on March 15 to report on Chechnya and, particularly, on the latest events in the village of Sernovodsk in western Chechnya.

The motion — proposed by independent deputies Anatoliy Kotkov and Bair Zhamsuyev and Yabloko member Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the Duma Foreign Affairs Committee — was carried by a 343-1 vote with two abstentions.

The Duma instructed Security Committee Chairman Viktor Ilyukhin of the Communist Party to immediately provide deputies with information about the attacks carried out by Chechen rebels on a number of facilities in Groznyy early today and on the situation in and around Sernovodsk.

Russia: Yeltsin: War in Chechnya To Stop in April-May

LD0603155396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1529 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 6 March (ITAR-TASS) — Boris Yeltsin assured women deputies of the State Duma today that the war in Chechnya will be stopped in April-May. Deputy Alevtina Aparina, who attended the Russian Federation president's meeting with women today in advance of the holiday [8 March — International Women's Day], informed the chamber of this.

She also told her colleagues that the head of state announced his intention to speak on television in the very near future. He said that decisions on Chechnya have been made.

A. Aparina also said that the president agreed to a special meeting with women deputies of the State Duma. A time for the meeting is to be agreed.

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Russia: Stroyev Discusses Yeltsin Meeting, Situation in Chechnya

LD0603233596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2030 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today Chairman of the Federation Council Yegor Stroyev met President Boris Yeltsin for the first time. Journalists of the All-Russian State Television and Radio company were given an opportunity to learn the details of the conversation which took place. The Speaker of the upper house of parliament said that Boris Yeltsin is satisfied with the first stage in the work of the Federation Council. As known, a direct question was posed with regard to establishing a coordination council which will develop basic laws. It is likely that the president will head the council.

[Begin Stroyev recording] ...not to waste efforts because over 500 laws were passed last year. Half of them have been rejected. In fact those were the laws which do not determine the fundamentals of the legislation, that is, in the end the basic laws have not been passed at all. [end recording]

Stroyev said that the president drew attention to the inadmissibility of politicization of both chambers of parliament during the elections. It is the legislative power that must be stable and correct in this complicated period.

[Begin recording] [correspondent V.Kurnikov] What is your attitude to the words by President Yeltsin that it is necessary to warn parliament against politicization during the preelection campaign. If you agree with this, will you be able to ensure impartiality of the Federation Council, which you head, while taking part in the state life, despite the fact that the Council consists of absolutely different people?

[Stroyev] I think the warning is absolutely correct. There are so many presidential nominees today. I don't know how many will remain in the end, but at present we have over 50 people, if I am not mistaken. Let us not tease anybody and turn the Federation Council, as well as the State Duma, into a political field of fighting for the presidential seat. This fighting will not bear any fruit, apart from trouble for this body afterwards. Therefore, as far as the Federation Council is concerned, I can firmly assure you that it will not become a political arena. It will not become an arena only because many, practically all, members of the Federation Council will have to face re-election in one year or half a year, and an attempt to appear at a rostrum with a leftist or rightist thought today will land them in an awkward situation tomorrow, when they will have to fight for themselves. Even this one factor, let alone tens of other factors, is making the Federation Council remain impassive... [pauses] impartial. [end recording]

Boris Yeltsin and Yegor Stroyev also spoke about the necessity of passing the Land Code as quickly as possible. This document is likely to be passed by the State Duma in April. However, the problem is not only in the absence of the law, but also the concept of the agrarian reform on the whole is needed.

[Begin recording] [correspondent V. Osipov] What do you think, will the adoption of the Land Code not be enough to tackle all the issues related to the land problem, and as you said, the society will have to discuss and approve the concept of the agrarian reform?

[Stroyev] Of course, it will not be enough. It goes without saying. The land problem is only part of the agrarian policy. If somebody thinks today that simple permission to sell or buy land will tackle the whole agrarian problem, they are deeply mistaken. I will not even hide my thoughts: It is simply an ignorant idea of the situation in the agrarian complex. The land problem in itself is a dual problem. Let us recall the dispute between Leo Tolstoy and Stolypin. One saw the land as a man's natural home, habitat, as a condition for man's life. He viewed it from the moral and philosophical point of view. But the other regarded the same land where peasants live as an object of production, an object for investing capital, as an object for labor productivity, as an object of ownership where a peasant can invest his labor, his intellect, and his skills. If we compare these views later, they both were right. These are the reverse sides of one coin and it would be impossible to separate them. Therefore, the expertise of European countries, Germany, France, the post-war experience of carrying out agrarian reforms have proven that it is not the land issue that is the main thing, but there are big issues of peasants' social life, of price parity, of technical equipment, scientific, and technological progress, the role and place of the state in regulating these relations.

In Europe it is not the states that are regulating it — It is the European Community that is doing it already. I visited Bavaria, met farmers and their families there; I lived with a farmer's family, and in France I met farmers and stayed in their homes. They are grateful to the EC and they worship the EC like an icon. They are not particularly aware how their federal governments help them, let alone regional authorities. That is why the adoption of the Land Code [laughs] is not a solution to the problem. On the contrary. If somebody thinks that this will tackle all problems of the rural economy, they are mistaken.

[Unidentified female correspondent] Yegor Semenovich, today's aggravation of the situation in Groznyy

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— what is it in your opinion? A show of strength by militants on the eve of the Security Council meeting? And in general, have you touched upon the topic of Chechnya in your conversation with the president?

[Stroyev] Yes, we have. I think it is an agony before the end of the events which are taking place in Chechnya today. Certainly, the way out should be looked for. These combat actions should be ended as soon as possible. But those forces who would not want to end this war, they are provoking the war more and more. A conversation we have just had with Doku Zavgayev confirmed... [pauses] ...and he, Doku Zagayev, said that this is no longer a massive drive. This is actions by separate groups who were in Groznyy, who continued firing and who are still being used as a banner, as a flag which is being used at the last moment. Of course, it is desirable that this agony should stop soon.

[Unidentified male correspondent] The Federation Council sees as their priority the all-round strengthening of security and stability in Russia. Could you say what is the place of Chechnya, the fighting against organized crime and economic safety, and how high are they on the agenda?

[Stroyev] First of all, a concept of Russia's economic safety has been prepared and we are going to hear it in the immediate future. I think this is a major step. It is conceptual and covers all issues at once. The second question — security on the whole. I have met Russian Prosecutor-General Skuratov and we have agreed that basic laws are needed to be passed very quickly, such as the Criminal Code, the Criminal-procedural Code and everything connected with the curbing of crime. Not all issues have been tackled as far as the judicial and legal systems are concerned. It was openly admitted at the congress today. That is why, in the practical work of the Federation Council we have a rule: to work first of all on basic laws, those which tackle the problem in general, and after that, on particular laws which to some extent complement and strengthen main, basic laws. This is what was not achieved last time. We have a similar agreement with Gennadiy Nikolayevich Seleznev from the regional State Duma, and I think main laws will be moved today. As far as the Chechen issue is concerned, Doku Zavgayev had his turn after me to meet the president. I think that the main thing is to present the Chechen problem as an inter-Chechen conflict as soon as possible. It is necessary to establish the legitimately elected power, it is necessary that the Chechens themselves began to establish order on their territory as soon as possible. Only then, I repeat, only in these conditions, can we gradually end the massacre there and withdraw from there normally. It is not possible to carry on and continue these ongoing processes further. [end recording]

The journalists were interested not only in the contents of the conversation between the president and the speaker of the upper house. For instance, they were curious to find out how Yegor Stroyev was managing to combine work in two posts at once: the chairman of the Federation Council and the head of the Orel Region administration. Judging by the facts, he was doing well. The region is not losing because of this combination. Both white and brown bread in Orel cost only 1,300 rubles per loaf. As has been discovered, this wonderful result could be achieved by quite an original method.

[Begin Stroyev recording] We set up a market structure, the Orlovskaya Niva, which helped farmers with spring sowing and the harvesting, and supplied fuel and spare parts, then procured grain at a price which was twice as much as the price recommended by the government — at a double price. Having bought everything produced for consumption, we did not increase prices further. Even if there is a thunderstorm with lightning, we will still have bread to last us until a new harvesting. Maybe there will be a slight increase in fuel prices because it is beyond our control, or transportation costs may be higher, but in general we have decided... [pauses] The company had a turnover of 360 billion rubles and we are expecting it to make twice as much this year. The company has found its image, and farmers today beg it to conclude agreements with them — conclude. If you do not mind, I would like to say the following: We are having this meeting on the eve of the Women's Day on 8 March. Allow me, on behalf of the Federation Council and all deputies, all members of the Federation Council, to congratulate our nice ladies on the occasion of the holiday of spring, the holiday of youth, the holiday of happiness. May peace always be in your homes, well-being, love for children and family, and everything you would wish for yourselves to have. Thank you all. [end recording]

Russia: Duma Approves Commission To Investigate Privatization

MK0703120396 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Svetlana Lolayeva: "Duma Approves the Statute on the Privatization Results Analysis Commission"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, the State Duma approved by 306 votes the statute on the commission that was created in early February to analyze the results of privatization in the years 1992 to 1996. The analysis will

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also define the responsibility of officials for its [privatization's] negative results. In accordance with it [the statute], the commission is supposed to assess the regulatory and legislative support of privatization, to determine how its results tally with its objectives, to uncover violations and to analyze the negative consequences of privatization. Having examined violations and distortions, members of the commission are supposed to suggest — proceeding from international and Russian experience — legislative means of correcting them. In order to exercise its powers the commission is authorized to use any materials that have to do with privatization, and to extract them from Goskomimushchestvo [The State Committee on the Administration of State Property], the General Prosecutor's Office, banks, and so on. Officials providing less than objective information will face administrative and criminal liability. Violations of the law discovered by the commission will be referred to the General Prosecutor's Office and the FSB [Federal Security Service].

Given the vast amount of work to be done and the substantial amount of funds and equipment provided under the statute (funds for expert research, for the temporary hiring of specialists and for the creation within the commission itself of a working group of specialists drawn from the Comptroller's Office and the Duma's analytical department), and the fact that the commission can only be disbanded by a Duma decree, it can not be ruled out that its work will become dragged out. However, the commission's chairman, Mullanur Ganeyev, a Communist, gave reassurances that the "commission is not a punitive, but a creative organ, which is supposed to contribute its small share towards the improvement of the economy."

Regional Affairs

Russia: Grachev Witnesses N. Caucasus Troops' Difficulties

MM0703110596 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Pelts: "Defense Minister Visits North Caucasus Military District Military Camps"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 6 March, in accordance with a plan of work in the North Caucasus Military District, Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev visited a number of units of Lieutenant General Konstantin Pulikovskiy's army corps, based in Krasnodar Kray. A meeting with officers at Krasnodar Garrison was planned for the afternoon of 6 March to assess the results of the defense minister's stay.

Just as on his tour of Moscow Military District units, Army General Pavel Grachev is devoting attention to servicemen's social and domestic problems in North Caucasus Military District units. Here he inspected the recently commissioned Enka military residential camp. The name of this well-appointed camp is connected with the foreign firms which built it. The name seemed already to have taken root, but action groups have now emerged among the camp's population to have it renamed. The people of Krasnodar Kray want to name the camp in honor of the renowned military leader Marshal G.K. Zhukov.

...The weather in Krasnodar deteriorated sharply precisely during these days. A lot of snow fell. But this did not stop combat training. We were able to see this for ourselves on a visit to the garrison range where Colonel Mikhail Konstantinov is the chief. Active combat training was taking place on the range. Tankmen, missilemen, antiaircraft gunners, and artillerymen were training. The conditions for the exercises were, let me repeat, very difficult. For example, Guards' Colonel Pavel Marents' missile troops have now been living under such conditions for many weeks. The situation is still tougher for the tank troops, whose families are still being forced to live right on the range.

The defense minister has already spoken repeatedly about the fact that sites for constructing military camps must be chosen carefully. We were able to see the correctness of those words at the Lesnaya Skazka ["Forest Fairy Tale"] camp. I tell you candidly that it is simply impossible to get into this "fairy tale" without a powerful Kamaz truck. Whereas such burdens are explicable on a range, how can they be explained to officers' families and to children who are forced to make their way to school by truck?

Naturally, Army General Pavel Grachev devoted very serious attention to these problems too.

The defense minister's return to Moscow is scheduled for Wednesday afternoon.

Russia: Yeltsin Aide Promises No Force Cuts in Kaliningrad

MM0703133196 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Gromak under the "Events and Comments" rubric: "It Would Be Premature To Say That the Baltic Fleet Has Had Its Day, Yuriy Baturin, the Russian Federation Presidential Assistant for National Security Affairs, Believes"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yuriy Baturin, the Russian Federation president's assistant for national security affairs, has completed a two-day trip to Kaliningrad Oblast, during which he met with leaders of Russia's westernmost

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oblast and with the command of the Baltic Fleet, the autonomous 11th Guards' Army, the Kaliningrad Border Troops Group, and other power structures. Yuriy Baturin observed an 11th Army command and staff exercise.

The main aim of the trip was to study cooperation among the power structures — primarily among the sailors, the border guards, and the Army. Attention was also devoted to problems of the Kaliningrad Special Region — a fundamentally new structure in the Armed Forces. How expedient is it to subordinate all Defense Ministry units and combined units to a single chief, in this case the commander of the Baltic Fleet? This question still has to be answered. At the same time, the presidential aide emphasized in one of the conversations, other options are also being considered — in particular, the Kaliningrad Special Region's subordination to the commander in chief of the Ground Forces.

The presidential assistant could not overlook Kaliningrad Oblast's special position in connection with the neighboring countries' plans to join NATO and the provocative statements by certain mass media on the future of the Baltic Fleet. Yuriy Baturin believes that NATO's eastward expansion will undoubtedly affect our defense policy. As for the Baltic Fleet's future, the presidential assistant firmly declared: "It would be premature and maybe even quite wrong to say that the Baltic Fleet has had its day."

If we take the presidential assistant's visit as a whole, the following circumstance is noteworthy: All the planned meetings with border guards were actually held. At least two factors account for this: First, an experiment is being conducted in the Kaliningrad Border Troops Group, which hinges on optimizing organization and the use of manpower. If the experiment is deemed a success, it will be extended to all the Border Troops. Second, as the presidential assistant said, it is proposed to examine and approve the federal border policy concept at the Russian Federation Security Council session scheduled for June.

At his meetings with servicemen Yuriy Baturin promised that there would be no wholesale troop reduction in Russia's westernmost region: "Kaliningrad Oblast is one of the most military of the oblasts, and the grouping density is very high here. Optimization is bound to happen in any case. Should the process be slowed down? Everything must be calculated correctly — what we must have here from the geostrategic and tactical viewpoints. At the same time we must rely on the existing resources and potential. But I am sure that there will be no reduction of the Armed Forces, because that would harm our national security here."

Russia: Text of December Decree on Dagestan's External Borders

MM0603144396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 6

[Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1298 "On Extending the Term of Russian Federation Government Decree No. 308 of 6 April 1995," signed by V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government, in Moscow on 30 December 1995; from the "Documents" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with a request from the Dagestan Republic Government the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

The term of Russian Federation Government Decree No. 308 of 6 April 1995: "On Lifting Certain Restrictions in the Republic of Dagestan Envisaged by Russian Federation Government Decree No. 1394 of 19 December 1994 'On Measures Regarding the Interim Restrictions on Crossing the Russian Federation Border With the Azerbaijani Republic and the Republic of Georgia'" (SOBRANIYE ZAKONODATELSTVA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII, 1995, No. 16, p 1416; No. 22, p 2071; No. 37, p 3630) is hereby extended.

[Signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

[Dated] Moscow, 30 December 1995

Russia: Moscow Troops Practice Neutralizing 'Radiation Hazard'

MM0703112796 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Colonel Igor Petrishev of the Moscow Military District Press Center: "Soon There Was No Area That Presented a 'Radiation Hazard'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A tactical and specialist exercise by chemical-warfare troops from the unit commanded by Vladimir Kozak has ended. During the exercise to neutralize an installation that posed a "radiation hazard" directed by Major General Vladimir Manchenko, chief of Moscow Military District's radiation, chemical, and biological protection troops, the unit demonstrated enhanced field and specialist training and successfully performed its mission in conditions as close as possible to those found in combat.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Further Discussions on Black Sea Fleet

LD0603185396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1734 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Stetsyuk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SEVASTOPOL March 6 (Itar-Tass) - The newly-appointed commander of the Black sea fleet, Viktor Kravchenko, met Ukrainian Navy commander Vladimir Bezkorovainy on Wednesday to discuss the further division of the disputed fleet.

The press centre of the Ukrainian Navy said in a release that the meeting took place "in the spirit of mutual understanding and the wish of both parties to cooperate in solving the problems".

"The results of the first stage of the fleet division were thoroughly analysed. It was stressed, in particular, that members of the commission managed, as a rule, to find a compromise in complicated situations", the release said.

"The commanders agreed that they would act in the spirit of mutual cooperation" in dividing the fleet between Russia and Ukraine as it is envisaged in corresponding agreements, the press centre said.

Ukraine: Deputy Prime Minister Visits Disputed Island

WS0703091896 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0739 GMT 7 Mar 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On March 6 afternoon Ukrainian vice-premier Vasyl Durdynets, currently on a working tour of the Odessa region, made a trip to the Zmiyinyy Island in the Black Sea, on what the vice-premier referred to as a familiarization mission.

The island, which Romania tends to claim as its territory, is part and parcel of Ukraine within the Odessa region's territory.

Speaking in an exclusive interview to UKRINFORM's Odessa correspondent Mr. Durdynets said that the Zmiyinyy Island is an important region and Ukraine's indisputable territory. The Zmiyinyy Island is rather economically developed with construction of many facilities, a wharf included, currently underway.

According to Mr. Durdynets, prospecting for oil and natural gas is underway to the West of the Zmiyinyy Island within the boundaries of Ukraine's economic zone.

Ukraine: Foreign Minister, Danish Counterpart Discuss Cooperation

LD0603225596 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A joint political declaration signed by the Ukrainian and Danish foreign ministers at the end of the first day of an official visit to Copenhagen by Ukraine's Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko is an exceptionally important step toward further cooperation between Ukraine and the Kingdom of Denmark. Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko and his counterpart Niels Petersen stressed this in an interview with representatives of the mass media after the signing ceremony of the Ukrainian-Danish documents.

In an interview with Ukrainian correspondents, Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko noted that the priority areas for deepening bilateral relations are, above all, the power engineering sector and energy saving. This cooperation is important for both countries since Denmark is keen to expand the market for its goods, and for its part, Ukraine wants to borrow the experience of Denmark, which since the beginning of the 1980s, has managed to save half of its energy by means of using Danish technology.

Both countries attach particular importance to enhancing general European security, taking into account the fact that Denmark will chair the OSCE from 1 January 1997. It will endeavor to provide a new impetus to discussing this issue, while recognizing that Ukraine's role in this regard is very important, Hennadiy Udovenko stressed.

Ukraine: Slovak Official Comments on Security Issues, Relations

LD0603124896 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1150 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The issue of Slovakia's entry to NATO will not be resolved until relations between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine have been finally clarified, Dusan Slobodnik, the chairman of the Slovak National Council's Foreign Affairs Committee, believes. At a news conference on 6 March at the end of his working visit to Ukraine he said: "Slovakia does not want to remain in a security vacuum, and therefore is striving to become a member of both the Western European Union and NATO." According to Slobodnik, these two processes are mutually linked, because the Western European Union is endeavoring to become a military organization, which will develop its own policy for the security of Central and Eastern European countries.

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He also emphasized that Slovakia would facilitate Ukraine's entry to the Central European Initiative in every possible way, because it believes that "Ukraine's chances of entering the Central European Initiative are absolute."

Touching on economic cooperation, Slobodnik stressed the necessity of hastening the drafting and signing of a treaty on free trade. Slovakia's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Ukraine emphasized that the legal base for the development of Ukrainian-Slovak relations was sufficient: of the 40 agreements in preparation, 33 have been signed. Slobodnik said he was in favor of setting up bilateral or trilateral joint enterprises between neighboring states. He maintained that his state's government had never supported the division of Ukrainians "into Ukrainians and Ruthenians." However, he said, the state's constitution does not prohibit the latter from choosing their nationality. According to the last census, 17,000 Ruthenians and 14,000 Ukrainians are resident in Slovakia. Slobodnik emphasized that Ruthenian self- determination is "their internal affair, and the government has not yet expressed its official attitude to them."

Borys Oliynyk, the chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Council Commission for Foreign Affairs and CIS Relations, noted the "politicization of Ruthenianism, which bears the hallmarks of separatism". He and Slobodnik said they were in favor of scientific clarification of the concept of Ruthenianism.

Ukraine: Ukrainian Rightists Decry Russian Espionage

MK0603150496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Tatyana Ivzhenko: "'Statehood' Looking for Spies. Deputies of the Ukrainian Supreme Council Charge Russian Special Services With Carrying Out Subversive Operations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The ultra-right group of deputies "Derzhavnist" ("Statehood") of the Ukrainian Supreme Council has issued a statement to the people's deputies about the need to reinforce the country's defenses and to take measures to ensure its security, independence, and sovereignty. According to "Derzhavnist," the main threat to Ukrainian independence comes from the Russian Federation, which "sees Ukraine as a sort of bridge to West Europe, and also a limitless demographic and resource base."

The statement says, in particular, that under the conditions of an economic and political crisis and wishing to pass itself off to the West as a "genuinely democratic state" which opens up prospects for considerable economic assistance, Russia has modified its pressure on Ukraine by replacing a direct standoff with covert operations under the aegis of the General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU] and the Federal Security Service [FSB].

Below is the text of the statement with minor abridgments.

[Statement begins] The main method of agent operations by the GRU and FSB has involved the infiltration of its personnel into the ranks of officers who returned to the Ukraine after the breakup of the Soviet Army, and has also involved the recruitment of servicemen who stayed to serve, or who still serve, on Ukrainian territory. This work is currently performed by both special departments of regular and combined units of the Russian army and representatives of the GRU's agent section. At the same time, the officers and generals who agreed to work for Russia against Ukraine were promised high posts in the Russian army, remuneration in cash, apartments in any region of the Russian Federation, and other material incentives and benefits.

The most favorable conditions for the Russian special services' agent operations have come about on the territory of the Crimean peninsula. This region turned out to be the sole place outside Russia where the GRU was given the opportunity to operate openly and on a legal basis, drawing on the intelligence agencies of the Black Sea Fleet, which has allegedly been placed under the joint Russian-Ukrainian command. Upon the commencement of active separatist processes in Crimea, the military intelligence agencies were enlarged and reinforced — despite the overall reduction in the fleet — particularly by the establishment of a naval intelligence center in Novorossiysk, whose areas of responsibility, apart from Georgia, Turkey, and Rumania, also included Ukraine. By order of the Black Sea Fleet's intelligence service chief, data on the military intelligence service's agents in Crimea, Odessa, and Nikolayev were turned over to the center, which brought about the paradoxical situation wherein a Russian intelligence agency attempted to give orders to agents on Ukrainian territory.

On the whole, work of the Russian special services in Crimea was largely facilitated by the existence of an agent network of the [former] KGB central staff, which, given the region's unique characteristics (the existence of a large number of party and government summer houses, sanatoriums, rest houses, and so forth) was not subordinate to, and was not even known to the local state security agencies, which, subsequently, were placed under Ukrainian jurisdiction. The main objectives of the agent network were information gathering and special propaganda. In particular, as soon as the division of

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the Black Sea Fleet began, officers of the GRU special propaganda section were included on the payroll of a number of newspapers published in Crimea, after which their pages were flooded with outright anti-Ukrainian articles.

Furthermore, an indirect sign of the GRU's operations in Ukraine was the opening of the Russian State Bank's field branch in Sevastopol, which carried out all its operations directly through Russia — bypassing the Ukrainian banking system. This made it possible to carry out uncontrolled operations with large sums of money. In this particular case the Russian authorities attributed the opening of this branch to the need for funding the fleet on a day-to-day basis. In reality, however, not only did such branches make their [GRU's] financial expansion in Ukraine possible, but the branches enabled them to finance subversive operations, to back convenient candidates during election campaigns, "to buy" politicians, and so forth.

The GRU has been keeping under all-out surveillance all the facilities of the Armed Forces, the Internal Affairs Ministry, and the Ukrainian National Guard, that are deployed on the autonomous republic's territory. Moreover, there have been incidents where Russian special services have detained Ukrainian servicemen, from whom representatives of the GRU and FSB demanded information on the strength, status, and activity of units and sub units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

The training of agents for work in Crimea has been carried out purposefully in special educational institutions located on Russian territory. Explicitly, according to an FSB officer who was taken prisoner by Dzhokhar Dudayev's security service in Chechnya, when he was trained in such a school outside Voronezh, undergoing training with him were several groups intended to be sent to Crimea for subsequent operations in the area of Kerch and Feodosiya. (Incidentally, it is precisely there that a well-orchestrated provocation against Crimean Tatars occurred some time later, causing mass disturbances, destruction, and casualties.)

Apart from purely agent-oriented methods, electronic intelligence equipment has also been used to monitor Ukraine's southern regions, namely, the 130th electronic intelligence center; the 3d intelligence radio detachment, and the Black Sea Fleet's 112th brigade of reconnaissance ships.

Right after the natural breakup of the Soviet empire, a meeting of the representatives of the GRU's 6th administration, electronic intelligence units, special research centers of the GRU, and also corresponding military educational institutions, was held in early 1992 at the base of the Electronic Intelligence Scientific and Research Institute in Kursk. The meeting was devoted to finding ways of improving the Russian army's electronic intelligence in new operational and strategic conditions. One of the top priorities discussed at the meeting was the question of organizing electronic intelligence against former Soviet republics.

Throughout 1992-1995, the main targets of the GRU's space intelligence on Ukrainian territory have been regular and combined missile units, military camps of the ground troops, large air force and naval bases, and also military facilities in Crimea. In this regard, intelligence gathering operations have intensified drastically during periods of heightening tensions in the region.

It should be noted that the afore-listed facts of the GRU's and FSB's intelligence operations against Ukraine (which run counter to a number of agreements concluded between the CIS states, and also to assertions by the top military-political leadership of the Russian Federation with regard to its allegedly sincere and friendly relations with Ukraine) have not been one-time or isolated acts, but they are increasingly manifesting themselves as an integral part of Russia's single foreign policy. This policy has become possible largely thanks to the continuing growth in the influence of the Russian special services on their country's top military-political leadership — something that was confirmed by the appointment of Foreign Intelligence Service [SVR] Director Ye. Primakov as Russian foreign minister. Yet other (just as graphic) examples have been the elevation of Colonel General Vyacheslav Trubnikov, current chief of the Russian SVR, to the National Security Council; the appointment of Rear Admiral Yu. Zubakov as Ye. Primakov's deputy at the Foreign Ministry; and also the appointment of Major General G. Rogozin, first deputy chief of the Presidential Security Service [SBP], to the committee for economic cooperation with CIS countries.

Undoubtedly, in the near future this will cause a drastic increase in the pressure on Ukraine on the part of the Russian Federation. Such prospects must be taken into account without fail when charting the course of Ukrainian foreign policy, particularly, on the eve of signing a large-scale Russian-Ukrainian political treaty." [statement ends]

Certain Ukrainian political scholars have already spoken out on the provocative role this text may have on the eve of Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kiev. Moreover, it is an open secret that the special services of the former USSR continue to work for their "new masters." At the same time, the Ukrainian Supreme Council has already begun "studying and analyzing" the document cited above, as

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well as supplements to it, so as "to fully assess the degree of foreign policy threat posed by Russia." In the view of a number of analysts, the adoption of some corresponding legislation might not underpin Ukrainian sovereignty, but cause a heightening of tensions in its relations with the Russian Federation and thus exacerbate conflicts both between the Supreme Council and the president, as well as between the left and right inside the parliament itself, which, undoubtedly, would not serve to strengthen Ukrainian statehood either.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Moroz Criticizes Latest Version of Draft Constitution

WS0703091396 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0739 GMT 7 Mar 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Commenting on the latest version of the draft constitution of Ukraine on March 5 Verkhovna Rada [Supreme Council] Chairperson Oleksandr Moroz referred to it as warranting parliamentary hearings.

However, as Mr. Moroz noted, the draft's separation of powers principle is anything but progressive, and the two-house pattern for the national parliament is questionable.

Mr. Moroz criticized those articles of the draft constitution which specify the President's and prime minister's competence insisting that the former should be just the head of state, while the latter's competence should be broader and cover primarily the area of economics.

Ukraine: Council Confirms Finance Minister as Parliament Deputy

LD0703104096 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0950 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — On 7 March the Ukrainian Supreme Council adopted a resolution recognizing the deputy powers of Ukrainian Finance Minister Petro Hermanchuk. He was elected a deputy on 4 February 1996 in Starovyzhevskiy constituency No. 72 in Volyn Region in place of Vasyl Kornelyuk, who died in a car accident.

Two hundred and eighteen deputies voted in favor of recognizing the deputy powers, and 48 voted against. Some representatives of the communist faction said they were against recognizing Petro Hermanchuk's deputy powers until he gives up the post of finance minister and starts working as a parliament deputy on a permanent basis.

Ukraine: Supreme Council Rejects Concept on Radiation Protection

LD0603204696 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — On 6 March the Ukrainian Supreme Council rejected the draft concept on the protection of the Ukrainian population from radiation in connection with the Chernobyl disaster, since it did not correspond to its designated purpose, namely protecting citizens who suffered as a result of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station. The Supreme Council ordered the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to work out and approve national radiation safety standards, standards of radionuclide content in food, ways of retrospectively calculating radiation doses received by the Ukrainian population during the accident at the Chernobyl plant, preventive and protective anti-radiation systems, and measures directed at offering compensation for actual risk from radiation.

Volodymyr Kholosha, Ukraine's minister for the protection of the population from the aftermath of the accident at Chernobyl plant, said at the session that the adoption of the concept was brought about because of a change in scientific views on how the accident at Chernobyl affected the human organism. The concept's priority was defined as rehabilitating contaminated areas and halting the practice of resettling people from areas contaminated with radiation.

The chairman of the Supreme Council Commission for Issues of the Chernobyl Disaster said that the government-backed concept would have led to the liquidation of special ecological zones and a reduction in the number of contaminated zones. According to him, if this had happened, about 2 million people would have been left outside controlled areas. He also emphasized that the concept's terminology still lacks scientific substantiation.

Ukraine: Crimean Republicans Demand End of Presidential Reps

LD0603200096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1811 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, March 6 (Interfax-Ukraine) — The faction of the Republican Party of Crimea at Crimean Parliament has issued a statement demanding that the institution of Ukrainian Presidential representatives to Crimea be cancelled.

An IF-U [INTERFAX-UKRAINE] correspondent reports that the statement, signed by faction Chair Sergey Tsekov (who was Crimean Parliament Speaker under President Yury Meshkov — IF-U), asserts that "direct

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presidential rule is actually being introduced in Crimea via the institution of Ukrainian Presidential representatives."

The statement says that the Crimean Republic is being used as a test range for new methods and ways to establish an authoritarian regime in Ukraine."

In the faction's view, "the granting of special powers to the permanent representative of the President of Ukraine to Crimea means the collapse of the policy of concessions and compromises, pursued by the leadership of the Crimean Parliament and is its logical outcome."

In January 1996 a new permanent representative of the President of Ukraine, Dmytro Stepanyuk, was appointed to Crimea. Simultaneously, the President issued a decree confirming the provision of presidential representatives, who were entitled, among other things, to overruling local authorities' decisions, if those were in conflict with the laws of Ukraine.

According to the statement, the hopes of some Crimean MPs for a constructive dialogue with the official Kiev have "brought Crimea to a practically total loss of statehood and have contributed to the consolidation of the rightist nationalist forces in Crimea and Ukraine."

The Republican Party of Crimea faction proposes that the Parliament of Ukraine should revoke the presidential decision to establish representation of the Ukrainian President in the Republic of Crimea, the decision to eliminate the executive committees of the autonomy's local councils and the acts related to the creation and activities of district state administrations in the peninsula.

The Statement also proposes that, before the cancellation of the decision on presidential representation in Crimea, the Parliament of Ukraine should strip MP Dmytro Stepanyuk of his parliamentary powers for having "crudely violated the laws of his own state".

The issue of the representation of Ukrainian President in Crimea has been incorporated into the agenda of the current session of the Crimean Parliament.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Foreign Participation in Privatization Encouraged

WS0703092096 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0012 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 6 — During first quarter 1996 the amount of property sold in Ukraine will equal that for the entire year of 1995, according to State Property Fund (SPF) Chairman Yuriy Yekhanurov.

Yekhanurov noted that during his recent U.S. visit he met with international financier George Soros and other World Bank authorities to seek their assistance in conducting international tenders in Ukraine.

Yekhanurov, who earlier complained that foreign investors in Ukraine were seeking too many privileges, has now declared that the SPF is ready to "pay greater attention to such investors."

According to him, foreign investors now have the right to participate in all aspects of privatization.

"Aliens can participate in privatization through tenders which sell shares of enterprises, or by purchasing compensation privatization certificates from resident individuals and participating in certificate privatization auctions," he said, adding that the first auction, planned to support the compensation privatization certificates campaign, will offer the most attractive properties, including hotels and malls in large cities.

Ukraine: Central Bank Head Criticizes Plan To Increase Deficit

WS0703092196 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0012 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Denis Pavliv, "Special to INTELNEWS"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 6 — Ukraine's top banker is up in arms about the Cabinet of Ministers' plan to increase the deficit in the 1996 budget it is trying to iron out with Parliament.

Although Parliament, in its first reading of the budget last month, presented the government with a deficit increased to 6.2 percent of gross domestic product increased, NBU [National Bank of Ukraine] governor Viktor Yushchenko said Wednesday that he is categorically opposed to the idea, arguing that it would result in an annual inflation level five times greater than the 35 percent currently being forecast.

"To go for the new deficit is amoral. I find no arguments, economic, social or political, so that we could say today that, for 1996, real pensions, real wages, and real grants as well as the circulating assets of the economy should be increased by KBV37 [karbovantsi] trillion," Yushchenko said.

However, Finance Minister Petro Hermanchuk reported Tuesday that a Cabinet decided that day to do just that — with a final decision on the matter to be taken some time next week.

The government plan would add KBV37.5 trillion (nearly $200 million to the red ink through which

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Ukraine hopes to operate this year, financing the additional deficit with the help of a credit from Japan's Import-Export Bank.

In the meantime, a group of International Monetary Fund experts in Kiev is formulating a final version of the organization's official memorandum on Ukrainian economic policy. The IMF has already announced that approval of about $900 million in additional standby credit to the country would be contingent upon its passage of a 1996 budget to its liking.

Ukraine: Pynzenyk Urges Tax Reform, Stresses Success

AU0703122896 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 27 Feb 96 p 3

["Topical Interview" with Viktor Pynzenyk, vice prime minister in Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, by Yuriy Horlachenko and Anatoliy Nesterenko: "The Ailments in Our Economy Have Been Neglected for Too Long"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The February visit to Lvov by Vice Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenyk was extremely hectic and short. He took part in the television feature "Tjte-'-Tjte" of the Oblast State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company and in a traditional news conference with representatives of the mass media, listened attentively to voters of his 264th Electoral District, and agreed to be interviewed by the newspaper ZA VILNU UKRAYINU [ZVU].**

[ZVU] How can you explain the neglected ailments of the Ukrainian economy that pull us backward.

[Pynzenyk] I want to remind you of the generally known axiom that has, unfortunately, become trite: The economy or production do not just exist for the sake of production. They must work for the people and satisfy their needs for products, work, or services.

Let me point out that the economy has complex and sometimes obviously incomprehensible mechanisms. It does not always happen that a seemingly straightforward and obvious solution (why not raise wages, pensions, and scholarships five or 10-fold and do so immediately!) may be correct and may lead to a desired result. In our tempestuous life, seemingly "good" intentions often produce totally opposite results. For example, while the general decline of the volume of industrial production in 1993 was 7.4 percent, the production of consumer goods fell by 16.5 percent; in 1994, the corresponding figures were 28.2 percent and 26.7 percent; and for the first six months of 1995 — 13.6 percent and 22.4 percent. Particularly critical is the situation with the production of separate groups of products for the population. Two circumstances are at work here. First, this decline is much greater than in those industries that manufacture articles for production-technological needs. For example, when production in 1995 fell by 40.9 percent in the light industry and by 17.5 percent in the foodstuffs industry, the decline in ferrous metallurgy was 6.7 percent, in nonferrous industry 9.1 percent, and in the chemical industry 3.6 percent. Second, there still exists the so-called "black hole" in Ukraine's economy. I mean the influx of imported goods (in most cases not of the best quality) that oust the Ukrainian producer from the national market. That is why our economy is on the decline, because the Ukrainian producer has found himself discriminated against on the Ukrainian market in favor of foreign producers. Never will our national economy stand on its own feet if conditions for sale of Ukrainian consumer goods are discriminatory compared with imported ones. If we want to live in a prosperous state and want to earn more, injustice against Ukrainian producers must be stopped.

Many entrepreneurs are aware of the existence of so-called legal channels through which cheap imported goods emerge on the Ukrainian market. Among them, there are so-called "shuttles," who have been granted the right to import goods without paying customs or excise duty for sums up to $1,500 and are exempt from paying the value-added tax on goods that are sold in Ukraine for freely convertible currency, and so on. Believe me, the whole series of decisions that have been adopted lately will, in the final analysis, be in the interests of all Ukrainian citizens.

Why were such wise decisions not adopted earlier? We must frankly admit that they had to be literally "instilled" in the minds of those who occupy top positions in the power structures, because they "affected" the interests of certain groups of the population, those in power, influential persons, and so on.

[ZVU] Does Ukraine have any positive achievements in the struggle against inflation or in the sphere of external economic activity involving CIS countries?

[Pynzenyk] I can state directly: For the first time, Ukraine has emerged from inflation, which is today estimated as a single digit figure and which is the lowest it has been over the four years of Ukrainian independence. For example, we managed to stabilize production, whose level today is almost not falling. Of course, there are problems: In individual sectors of the economy, the decline in production continues. However, we do have sectors where there is significant recovery of activity. For the first time, we have arrived at a situation when wages do not lag behind price hikes. I agree that this is very little, compared to the decline of past years,

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but a positive trend has emerged that is leading us up instead of pulling down.

Yet another aspect: We finished the year 1994 with the debt to Russia for gas alone amounting to $1.4 billion plus the $700-million debt to Turkmenistan. In 1995, we concluded our mutual settlements without debts to either Russia or Turkmenistan for the gas consumed. Moreover, we even paid off the $220 million debt for 1994. These are the initial positive phenomena that are presently taking root in the Ukrainian economy. Of course, there has not been a breakthrough in the economy as a whole. This just could not happen. The problem of emergence from the crisis is not just for one year. A long period of time is necessary for us to firmly embark upon the road toward a true upsurge in the Ukrainian economy.

[ZVU] What can you say about the availability in our economy of the most hazardous trends that, allegedly, threaten to destabilize Ukraine?

[Pynzenyk] Fear of difficulties seems to me to be the most hazardous of these trends. This is particularly characteristic of individual politicians, who think that a problem disappears when they turn a blind eye on it. Unfortunately, it does not disappear. By way of illustration, it is possible to quote picketings and strikes organized by Donbass miners. It is precisely when we are afraid to take radical measures to resolve problems and restrict ourselves to half-measures, that those same problems later arise in much more acute forms. It is very dangerous if somebody's hand suddenly quivers and a traditional and seemingly simple decision is taken involving closing and patching up holes or injecting newly printed money into a particular economic sphere. I would particularly like to stress this: The Ukrainian Government and National Bank have lately been under tremendous pressure — demands that enormous sums of money be issued. Never again will we resort to such measures. While holding my high post, I personally will do everything I can to prevent such "decisions" from being taken. We are well aware of the severe consequences and disasters that such seemingly "good" actions may entail for ordinary people.

[ZVU] What role does the so-called fifth power — the shadow economy — play in these dangerous trends?

[Pynzenyk] Of course, there are political reasons for this. Some people take advantage of the difficulties. I think that some individuals would very much like to make people's lives even more difficult. There are purely economic reasons that push representatives of the shadow business to actions and to activity. The overcoming of inflation, for example, has made it possible for us to block the channels of strong shadow redistribution of profits. At the end of 1994, we were under strong pressure. The main reason: The shadow dealers lost their easy profits. At that time, we overcame and will continue to overcome that colossal pressure and will stop other channels or loopholes in our economy that made it possible for dishonest people to obtain easy profits. We have prepared a large package of legislative decisions. We have started, in part, to implement them. It is true, though, that some people in power find "strong" arguments for stopping their action. I hope that those who are among chronic debtors in paying taxes to the state will finally realize that we will be happy to channel the funds received from them, to support the lowest-income citizens.

[ZVU] Why does the state continue its weak protectionist policy with regard to Ukrainian producers?

[Pynzenyk] Many people are surprised by the diversity of imported goods on the shelves: Foreign mayonnaise and lard and pasta, not to mention sweets, alcoholic beverages, and cigarettes, as well as manufactured goods. Starting from the year 1996, the situation has been changing for the better for Ukrainian producers. The decision to cancel benefits that were given to individual structures, which had a legal right not to pay taxes on incomes obtained as a result of selling goods imported from abroad, have been considered three times by legislation. Let me point out that these incomes are very large. Just for three groups of goods — alcohol, cigarettes, and light automobiles — annual receipts to the budget may come up to between $600 million and $700 million. Last year, we only received $18 million in the form of taxes and customs duty. Incidentally, all of this compels us to shift the burden of huge taxes upon our domestic producers, who can hardly make ends meet even without it. Unfortunately, to this day, quite a number of mini-holes have been left, whether consciously or unconsciously, by our legislation, that have enabled individual persons and commercial structures to evade state taxation altogether. Finally, we have six governmental laws, edicts, and decrees with the help of which we will gradually, but decisively, solve this acute problem.

[ZVU] It is generally known that the situation in the coal industry has been quite tense. What position does the government occupy on this issue?

[Pynzenyk] Our coal industry is a graphic example of how fear of innovation leads to an exacerbation of old problems. Our coal industry (incidentally, nobody presently owes it anything, not even the budget) is unprofitable. Just six months ago, the leadership of the Ministry of Coal Industry was faced with the task of reforming this important sector of the economy. In other

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words, it was necessary to lift the burden from the state level and intensify influence on individual sensitive spots — enterprises. This is, generally speaking, difficult and complicated work involving a redistribution of people and wages. This work will have to be started anew by the new leadership of the Coal Industry Ministry. Perhaps, some people still hope that the government will resort to decisions associated with issuing large sums of money. However, this is a futile hope, because if put into effect, it will undoubtedly lead to a disaster and a great tragedy for the Ukrainian people.

[ZVU] At the news conference on 2 February 1996, you spoke about the accord on gas deliveries from Russia. What are most interesting aspects there?

[Pynzenyk] I personally informed Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk that the accord is very dangerous. It may have extremely undesirable consequences. Unfortunately, a month has passed since then, but it is still not known who will pay for the blue fuel. In particular, many entrepreneurs have been informed about the situation that has taken shape. I hope that my memorandum with proposals will be reflected in corresponding governmental decisions. However, I reiterate, it is a very serious problem.

"I would like to underscore once again," said Viktor Pynzenyk at the end of the conversation, "that we have embarked upon a very difficult path. There are no easy decisions on it. Perhaps, not all of the decisions are clear at the moment. Some of them will even give rise to objections and indignation. Nor could there be easy decisions on this road. The ailments have been neglected for too long.... However, I am personally convinced that it is only through firm, confident, balanced, and scientifically well-considered policy and meetings with people and efforts to convince them that there is no other way out of the crisis that we will achieve success."

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Belarus

Belarus: Lukashenka Sends Condolences Over Israeli Bomb Attacks

WS0603153896 Minsk BELAPAN in English 1431 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As a BELAPAN correspondent was informed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has sent a telegram to his Israeli counterpart Ezer Weizman in view of the Jerusalem bombing. "Your excellency, the information about acts of terrorism which resulted in killing of tens of people has hurt the hearts of Belarusians," the telegram reads. "The people of our Republic condemn terrorism because it cannot be a means for the solution of political problems. On behalf of the Belarusian people and myself personally I would like to express sympathy with you, the people of Israel, the relations and friends of those killed."

Belarus: Lukashenka Promises 'Significant Assistance' to FRY

LD0603200796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1849 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, Mar 6 (Interfax-West) — Belarus may provide the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with such aid as to "guarantee its territorial integrity," Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka said in Minsk Wednesday after talks with Yugoslav President Zoran Lilic.

"Belarus will provide significant assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia not only with supplies of products of peaceful use but also with such products that would ensure the inviolability of its borders," Lukashenka told a news conference.

He would not specify on whether Belarus will supply armaments to Yugoslavia. "The assistance will not be limited to military aid; it will also be provided in the form of trade and economic cooperation which is just as important for ensuring the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia," he said.

The two presidents signed a treaty on friendship and cooperation. The sides also signed a package of intergovernmental agreements, in particular on trade and economic cooperation and mutual protection of investments.

On Thursday, Lilic will meet with Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, visit the Belarusian optical-mechanical company, a major defense industry enterprise in Belarus, and will deliver a speech at the National Academy of Sciences.

Belarus: Lukashenka Signs Agreements With FRY's President

WS0703093996 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belarus is ready to help Yugoslavia in its terrible misfortune in which the people of this country found themselves against their will, stated Alyaksandr Lukashenka during negotiations with President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Zoran Lilic. According to Alyaksandr Lukashenka, in the course of a two hour one-on-one conversation, the sides determined their stances in all areas of cooperation. They agreed on opening a Yugoslav Embassy in Belarus and a Belarusian diplomatic mission in Belgrade. After the completion of the negotiations, an agreement on friendship and cooperation between Belarus and Yugoslavia was signed, as well as an intergovernmental agreemen on trade and economic cooperation; on the creation of appropriate intergovernmental commissions for mutual encouragement and protection of investments; on cooperation in the fields of education, culture, sports, and tourism; as well as on scientific-technical activities, and international motor transport communications.

Belarus: Lukashenka, FRY's Lilic Stress 'Brotherly' Relations

AU0603180396 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report by Dusan Vojnovic from the Belarus capital of Minsk]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Vojnovic] The FRY president was greeted in a traditionally ceremonial way upon arrival at the airport in the Belarus capital of Minsk. He was offered bread and salt as a welcoming gesture and was then greeted by his host, Belarus President Alyaksandr Lukashenka. Presidents Lilic and Lukashenka saluted the flags of the two countries and inspected the guard of honor. The FRY and Belarus anthems were then played.

Following the official ceremony the two presidents addressed reporters. FRY President Zoran Lilic was the first to speak.

[Begin Lilic recording] I would like to express my personal satisfaction and that of the entire delegation that has arrived in Belarus for many reasons. I think that, of course, our visit is a sign of recognition to Belarus and our friend President Lukashenka for everything that he has done during the sanctions, which have caused immense damage not only to the FRY, but also to the region as a whole, and probably also to the wider area of the Balkans, and perhaps even to

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Europe, as well as for everything they have done in not recognizing such a form of pressure on the FRY. I am convinced that our talks today and tomorrow with President Lukashenka and other Belarus officials will contribute to the establishment of at least the level of economic cooperation and bilateral relations that we had before the sanctions. We have traditionally good relations with Belarus and I believe that we will promote them significantly. I expect that to happen with this visit. Briefly, I wish to greet all the citizens of Belarus and I wish them prosperity and success with all the reforms that they have started, and to preserve what is most important and that is national wealth and everything else that they have been doing so far. I think that this is the correct path. The path that they have taken should in a way serve as an example to other republics. [end recording]

[Vojnovic] Belarus President Alyaksandr Lukashenka then reiterated that Belarus had not supported the sanctions against the FRY and that he himself, as he said, was proud of that.

[Begin Lukashenka recording in Russian with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation] We are proud for not supporting the sanctions at the time and for not making a move left or right legally and doing nothing to block our brotherly state and brotherly nation. That is why we can look your president straight in the eye and say openly that you are our people, our brotherly people, and that we will support you in everything. I am proud for not having done anything at the time to spoil relations with the FRY and much could have been done. The Yugoslavs have to know that they have friends here in the former Soviet Union, and not only in Belarus but in Russia, the Ukraine, and other states. We will support the very good relations with the FRY in all spheres of our activity. [end recording] [passage omitted]

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Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Prime Minister Comments on Visit to Moscow

LD0703105596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0500 GMT 7 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday our correspondent had a meeting with Tajikistan's Prime Minister Yahya Azimov. Tajik-Russian relations will develop more intensively, the prime minister said.

[Correspondent Logunova] We are in favor of strengthening economic and political links with Russia, which is our strategic ally, Yahya Azimov said. He has just returned from Moscow. The first working visit by the new prime minister of Tajikistan was very fruitful, he said.

[Begin Azimov recording] Our side has prepared all the documents and so today we are virtually ready to enter into a customs union. In a few days, when the meeting of heads of states is held, this question will be considered. Another important issue is the issue of a payments union. There has also been a preliminary agreement on the documents which our side had to prepare. [end recording]

[Logunova] In Moscow there was also discussion of questions of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries on mutually advantageous conditions. Thus, for example, Russia will supply spare parts for agricultural equipment and Tajikistan will supply raw cotton for light industry.

The prime minister believes that economic cooperation should be constructed only on practical help.

Tajikistan: Importance of Afghan President Visit Stressed

LD0703075796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0534 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dushanbe March 7 (Itar-Tass) — Matters aimed at strengthening peace and security in the region and at developing Tajik-Afghan bilateral cooperation will figure importantly during talks between President Emomali Rakhmanov of Tajikistan and his Afghan counterpart, Borhanoddin Rabbani, who arrives here on Thursday, Igor Sattarov, head of the Tajik Foreign Ministry's Information Department, has told Itar-Tass.

The distinguished Afghan guest is to have meetings with Emomali Rakhmanov. The two delegations will hold talks on bilateral cooperation matters.

Tajikistan attaches much importance to the Afghan leader's visit. The forthcoming talks are to deal with a package of issues connected with normalising the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, the repatriation of Tajik refugees, as well as relations with opposition forces, which are now based in Afghanistan, particularly with their intransigent wing.

A package of matters concerning trade-and-economic cooperation, including cross-border trade arrangements, are also expected to be discussed during the Afghan president's visit, Sattarov said.

Tajikistan: Russian Community in Rogun Said on Brink of Extinction

MK0603141296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 3

[NEGA report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Approximately 200 Russian-speaking families in the town of Rogun (Komsomolabad District) are on the brink of physical extinction. It has been planned to dispatch in the near future a convoy with a cargo of flour accompanied by a unit of the 201st Russian Division. It was advised at the Russian Embassy in Tajikistan, however, that this action was postponed owing to a tense situation in the area of the village of Sicharog, several kilometers from Rogun.

The Russian community of the town of Rogun has appealed to the Russian Federation State Duma and the leaders of various political parties in open letters. However, Russian Embassy officers think, it seems impossible at the moment to offer the people in distress money, housing, and jobs anywhere in Russia.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan: Niyazov Meets With Afghanistan's Rabbani

LD0603185996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1739 GMT 6 Mar 96

[By Anna Kurbanova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASHGABAT, March 6 (Itar-Tass) - Afghanistan is able to solve its problems without foreign interference, visiting Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani told Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov on Wednesday.

The neutral Turkmenistan is interested in an early settlement of the internal confrontation in neighbouring Afghanistan, Niyazov said.

"Our countries possess an enormous potential for bilateral and regional economic cooperation. We should take

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advantage of it. But it will be possible only when a lasting peace comes to Afghanistan," he said.

Both presidents described as viable the projects to build a railway and a pipeline on Afghan territory.

On Thursday [7 March] morning, Rabbani will visit a mosque in the town of Gekdepe, not far away from the Turkmen capital. Before departure for Afghanistan, he will meet Niyazov at the airport.

Turkmenistan: Afghan President Departs Ashgabat for Tajikistan

LD0703100296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0934 GMT 7 Mar 96

[By Anna Kurbanova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ASHGABAT, March 7 (Itar-Tass) — President of Afghanistan Borhanoddin Rabbani at the end of his two- day visit to Turkmenistan flew to Tajikistan today. Before his departure a concluding meeting between him and his Turkmen host and counterpart Saparmurad Niyazov was held at the Ashgabat international airport today.

The heads of the two states expressed confidence that internal problems in Afghanistan will be resolved through peaceful means. The two leaders reaffirmed Turkmenistan's and Afghanistan's interest in increasing cooperation in realizing joint projects, which is possible only under conditions of peace in the country. Laying a railway line, gas and oil pipelines and building motor highways will strengthen economic ties between the two states.

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Armenia

Armenia: Foreign Minister Meets With Iranian Counterpart

LD0603153596 Tehran IRNA in English 1245 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, March 6, IRNA — The visiting Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Armenian counterpart Vahan Papazyan on Wednesday exchanged views on expansion of Tehran-Yerevan cooperation and settlement of regional crises, especially the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Karabakh.

Papazyan hailed Iran as a "friendly and neighboring" country, striving for restoration of stability and tranquility in the region, especially for finding a fair solution to the Karabakh issue.

Thanking Iran for its efforts, Papazyan called for continuation of the peace efforts and said bilateral ties should expand in various political, economic and cultural spheres.

Velayati for his part laid emphasis on Iran's efforts to solve Karabakh dispute and said continuation of the crises was not at all in the interest of any side.

He said that exchange of diplomatic delegations between the two countries would lead to further deepening of mutual cooperation.

In another development, Velayati held separate talks with Armenian Prime Minister Hrant Bagratyan and the chairman of the Constitution Council on promotion of all-out bilateral ties, regional cooperation, convention of the second session of Irano-Armenian joint economic commission, settlement of Karabakh dispute and restoration of tranquility to the region.

The Armenian Constitution Council chairman underlined at the meeting the continuation of mutual cooperation, saying that Iran and Armenia could have more cooperation in view of their existing potentials.

Velayati said in reply that there were no obstacles on the way of expanding bilateral ties and called for making efforts to solve regional conflicts and for settlement of differences between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Armenian premier and Velayati in their meeting surveyed Tehran-Yerevan cooperation in various spheres, stressing the need to convene the second session of Tehran-Yerevan joint economic commission and implementation of joint projects.

Moreover, they expressed hope that the second session of Tehran-Yerevan joint economic commission would be held in Tehran early next Iranian calendar year (beginning March 20, 1996).

Among other topics discussed by the two sides were mutual cooperation in the areas of transportation and telecommunication.

Armenia: Iranian Foreign Minister's Contacts Reported

NC0603221796 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1900 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan today received a delegation headed by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

In greeting the Armenian president in the name of the Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Mr. Velayati handed him a joint invitation from the Iranian president and Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov to attend the inauguration of the [name indistinct] railway linking Turkmenistan to Iran on 13 May. The Armenian president gladly accepted the invitation.

During the meeting, the sides expressed mutual satisfaction with the current friendly Armenian-Iranian relations and expressed readiness to further deepen bilateral ties and expand regional economic cooperation and communications routes.

In the name of both sides, President Levon Ter-Petrosyan thanked Gagik Harutyunian, the chairman of the Constitutional Court, for his productive work while chairing the State Commission for Coordinating Armenian-Iranian Ties. Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan, Armenian president's chief adviser Zhirayr Liparityan, and other officials attended the meeting.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati was also received by Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan today. The sides affirmed the importance of furthering the mutually beneficial relations unfolding between the two countries and examined a number of issues relating to the consolidation of trade and economic ties. They also touched upon matters pertaining to regional politics, viewing them in particular from the perspective of evolving economic relations.

Mr. Velayati stated that the Iranian side is working intensively to hold the next session of the Armenian-Iranian commission in Tehran.

Gagik Harutyunyan, chairman of the Armenian Constitutional Court, today also received the Iranian delegation headed by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. The sides expressed satisfaction with the dynamic development of relations between the two countries. Gagik Harutyunyan noted that although he will no

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longer head the State Commission for Coordination of Armenian-Iranian Ties due to his new assignment, he will continue to make his due contribution to the development of relations between the countries and to the productive resolution of mutual problems.

Mr. Velayati expressed special thanks to Gagik Harutyunyan for his contribution to the development of relations. At the guest's request, Gagik Harutyunyan briefed him on the structure of the Constitutional Court and explained a number of issues relating to the court's jurisdictions.

The Iranian foreign minister's planned news conference on 6 March did not take place, probably at his request. Mr. Velayati made only a passing remark on the goals and results of his visit to reporters gathered at the entrance of the president's residence after his meeting with the Armenian president. As already known from the press, the aim of the visit was to further good-neighborly relations and examine matters of mutual concern.

During his meeting with the Armenian president, the Iranian foreign minister handed him an invitation from Iranian President Rafsanjani to attend the inauguration of the (?Sarakhs-Tedzhen) railway in Iran. Regional issues and Nagorno-Karabakh were discussed during the meeting.

Mr. Velayati expressed satisfaction with bilateral and multilateral cooperation, as well as with the negotiating process on the Karabakh problem. He expressed the hope that the sides will find a just and mutually beneficial position, will attain their just demands, that the refugees will return to their homes, that peace will be restored in the region, and that good-neighborly ties will be established between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. The Iranian Foreign Minister then noted the successful development of ties between Armenia and Iran in the sphere of politics, economy, trade, science, and culture.

Due to a lack of time, reporters did not receive replies to their questions.

Armenia: Velayati Departs Yerevan for Moscow

LD0603164496 Tehran IRNA in English
1614 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, March 6, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati winding up his one day visit to Armenia, left Yerevan on Wednesday for Moscow, seen off by Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan and some other Armenian officials.

During his stay in Yerevan, Velayati held talks with Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, president of Constitutional Council, Armenian prime minister, speaker of parliament and foreign minister.

Issues dealing with mutual and regional cooperation, convening the Tehran-Yerevan joint economic commission and settlement of Karabakh conflict were on the agenda of Velayati's negotiations with Armenian officials.

In his talks with the Armenian officials, Velayati reiterated that negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia are the only way to resolve the conflict in Karabakh and that the military option would only worsen the crisis in the region.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Foreign Ministry Statement on Karabakh Status

NC0603144396 Baku TURAN in English
0024 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/06.03.96/TURAN—"On March 1, 1996 Armenia's National Assembly signed the agreement on cooperation with illegal structure created in Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region occupied by Armenia", today statement of Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Ministry reads.

In connection with signing of the above-mentioned agreement, Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Ministry announces that for the last eight years Armenia carries out aggression against Azerbaijan to separate the Nagorno-Karabakh region and unite it with Armenia.

Despite the UN and OSCE resolutions, which announced Armenia the party to the conflict, Yerevan keeps on saying to the whole world that it is not involved in the conflict. Armenia's real activities were initiation of separatism in Azerbaijan's Nagorno Karabakh region, financial and military assistance to illegal armed units as well as direct participation in the military activities, which have led to occupation of 20 percent Azeri territories by Armenia and appearance of million refugees, the statement reads.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Ministry reports the last step of Armenia, which signed the above-mentioned agreement with illegal structure in Nagorno-Karabakh, "is blatant and direct interference in internal affairs of sovereign Azerbaijan Republic". The Ministry stresses that the document "contradicts to the international norms and cannot have the juridical force".

"Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Ministry considers the activities of Armenia's National Assembly as challenge to

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the position of the OSCE-member states and provocation aimed at breaking of mediatorial efforts for peace settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict".

Azerbaijan: Iranian Group Appeals to Aliyev on 'Independence'

NC0603145496 Baku TURAN in English 0024 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/06.03.96/TURAN—The Council of Independence of Southern [Iranian] Azerbaijan has appealed to President Aliyev.

The document criticises the position of Iran's Foreign Affairs Minister, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who has accused Azerbaijan of "friendly relations with Israel". The appeal notes that the Karabakh conflict and the Caspian status are "the actions planned by Farsi and Russian chauvinists". The authors of the appeal believe that "Iran and Russia are not interested in existence of independent Azerbaijan".

The authors of the appeal have applied to President Aliyev with the request to receive them and provide support for their struggle. The Azeri President has been recommended to create the conditions for activities of organizations fighting for independence of Southern Azerbaijan in Azerbaijan.

The appeal reads that the Irani authorities provide military and other assistance to Armenia. Tehran's regime puts obstacles on the way of assistance for Azerbaijan.

* More than 20 million Azeris live in Southern Azerbaijan (northern Iran). In 1994 the supporters of independence of this regioa proclaimed about creation of several political organizations, which started struggle for independence of Southern Azerbaijan of Tehran's regime.

Azerbaijan: Impact of Russian Border Plan Weighed

964F1339A Baku ZERKALO in Russian 24 Feb 96 No 8, p 6

[Report by the Tetis Analysis Group: "Where Is the Border in 'Border Compromise'?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] From all appearances, the consequences of an agreement on cooperation between the border services of Russia and Azerbaijan concerning borders with third countries may turn out to be quite dramatic.

Azerbaijani National Security Minister Hamig Abbasov told a correspondent of the EKSKLYUZIV agency that the agreement on border cooperation initialed by the chiefs of border troops of Azerbaijan and Russia will enter into force only after it has been ratified by the Milli Mejlis [People's Assembly]. The Ministry of National Security chief also noted that this agreement can in no way be viewed as a concession to Russia, emphasizing that as before, Azerbaijan does not differentiate between its "external" and "internal" borders. The agreement itself affects borders not only with Iran and Turkey, but with Georgia and Armenia as well.

Nevertheless, a genuine political storm has arisen in the opposition camp. In this regard, the greatest indignation has been elicited not by the signing of the "border" agreement itself, but by the president's statement, which is seen as an expression of readiness under certain conditions to subscribe to agreements existing within the CIS framework on the protection of external borders involving the deployment of a Russian military contingent to these external borders. This fact shows that the agreement—not yet ratified, not yet even signed—is nonetheless capable of bearing its fruit—which is not entirely positive. And whereas the opposition always expresses its discontent with the authority openly, for understandable reasons, we can only guess as to the reaction of Azerbaijan's Western partners in view of existing diplomatic norms.

We need not doubt that today's "border" events constitute just one stage in a more comprehensive process, other parts of which are the signing of the agreement on shipment of Azerbaijan's early oil along the "northern" routing and the renewal of Russian mediation efforts in Karabakh. The change of leadership in Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coinciding in time with the warming of Russian-Azerbaijani relations, may be assessed by certain Western observers as the primary reason. Since the arrival in Smolensk Square of former "chief Russian spy" Yevgeniy Primakov is unambiguously perceived in the West as a concession to the conservative, "sovereign power" advocates, Azerbaijan's readiness to cooperate with Primakov following a clear dislike for Kozyrev can in no way be categorized among our merits—even if both are entirely justified from the point of view of Azerbaijan's interests. Such an overt revision of policy with respect to Russia can also be seen as the absence of a stable foreign policy, which in itself definitively undermines Azerbaijan's image in the international arena.

More dramatic still will be the consequences of this step in domestic political life. The democratic opposition personified by Musavat, the Azerbaijan People's Front Party, Azerbaijan National Independence Party, and organizations close to them has received a gift they could not even dream of—the opportunity to monopolize the concept of struggle for the sovereignty and independence of Azerbaijan. Realizing this, the opposition

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has dealt a direct blow to the image of the current leadership and supporters of the state policy. Also playing into the hands of the opposition is the fact that Azerbaijan's present "alliance overture" to Russia is hardly the first. Abdurakhman Vezirov's flirtation with Moscow ended up in Black January, that of Ayaz Mutalibov—in the Khodzhaly tragedy, and Azerbaijan's entry into the CIS was echoed in the seizure of several rayons situated outside Nagornyy Karabakh.

In all instances, Moscow demanded strategic concessions from Baku in exchange for tactical cooperation. The "tactical" gains were soon reduced to naught, while the strategic concessions, reinforced by appropriate agreements, remained in force. Indirect confirmation of this can be seen in the fact that Russian officials prefer to separate signing of the agreement on the "northern" route for shipment of Azerbaijani oil from the question of status of the Caspian—to the effect that the one does not concern the other. Putting it simply, the expected political consequences of the economic agreement, just as was the case with LUKoil's joining the consortium as a participant, did not follow.

At the same time, such actions objectively play into the hands of the supporters of Ayaz Mutalibov, for whom the argument literally falls down from the heavens: See now, we had to go begging to Moscow all the same, which is what we told you from the very beginning. Whereas in actuality, things are perhaps not quite so, or even completely not so, but the argument sounds convincing.

Thus, the agreement is not yet ratified and the treaty is not yet signed, but they have already yielded their fruits—albeit quite different from what was expected.

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze on Oil Pipeline, Relations With Turkey

TA0603202396 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze has declared that the Baku-(Supsa) line, which will transport early production oil to international markets, will constitute the basis of the Baku-Ceyhan route.

According to ANATOLIA, Shevardnadze said that the agreement on the pipeline will be signed in Tbilisi on 8 March, but there is no final decision yet on the financing of the project. Shevardnadze remarked that President Suleyman Demirel and Prime Minister Tansu Ciller contributed significantly to the decision on the Baku-(Supsa) pipeline. Pointing out that the visit recently paid to his country by Mustafa Kalemli, speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, was very beneficial in this regard, Shevardnadze welcomed Kalemli's proposal to conduct interparliamentary cooperation in a bid to introduce peace and stability into the Caucasus. Shevardnadze expressed the belief that his upcoming visit to Turkey as the official guest of Demirel will contribute to the further strengthening of bilateral relations.

Georgia: Shevardnadze 'Alarmed' at Wheat Delivery to Abkhazia

LD0603160996 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1320 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 6 Mar — An IBERIA correspondent reports that Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze has expressed alarm over the fact that despite numerous warnings by the Turkish Government, a Turkish ship delivered in the port of Sukhumi 800 tonnes of wheat for Abkhazia without the Georgian Government's consent.

Georgia: Georgia Stakes Claim to Part of Black Sea Fleet

MK0703090496 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 6 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Georgiy Dvali: "If You Want To Get Anything at All, Ask for More"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The statement concerning the Black Sea Fleet — namely, the demand that part of it be ceded to Georgia — became the first step taken by the newly appointed Georgian foreign minister, Irakliy Menagarishvili. At first glance this initiative is absurd. It is a little too late in the day for Tbilisi to make claims anyway. And Moscow and Kiev have already in effect agreed on the division of the fleet between themselves. Even so, sources in the Georgian Government say there is some rationale behind the move by the head of the Georgian Foreign Ministry.

A source close to the Georgian Government told your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent that Irakliy Menagarishvili came out with his sensational statement after informal consultations with high-ranking representatives of the Russian and Ukrainian Foreign Ministries. The most interesting part is that Kiev (unlike Moscow) received Georgia's declaration at least "with understanding." Although the statement by the Ukrainian Defense Ministry noted that Georgia may claim only that part of the Black Sea Fleet that is based in Georgian ports, because Russia and Ukraine have already concluded an agreement on the division of ships based in Crimea. The head of the Russian

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Federation's Foreign Ministry (incidentally, Yevgeniy Primakov is Eduard Shevardnadze's long-standing friend; Primakov grew up in Tbilisi and eventually was granted the freedom of the city) also reacted rather sharply: "Wanting does not mean having." A high-ranking Russian Defense Ministry official was more specific: "Georgia has already received part of Black Sea Fleet infrastructure, seizing a naval base in Poti. So any further claims on its part are groundless." Thus, Russia has stated its position quite unambiguously. Yet, observers point out, things are not that simple. Complex political intrigue may be lurking behind Menagarishvili's proposal.

As is known, back in 1992 the Black Sea Fleet problem became a stumbling block in the relations between Russia and Ukraine, and it was decided at the time that the fleet would be divided only between them. The third Black Sea republic of the former USSR, Georgia, was at the time consumed by the flames of war. It will also be recalled that at the close of 1991 Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Georgia's first president, announced his intention to nationalize that part of the Black Sea Fleet, which, according to him, was in the zone of Georgia's jurisdiction. The leadership of Abkhazia came back with a sharp statement over the "strange malleability of the union leadership" on the issue of fleet division. The Russian leadership in effect proved to be less malleable. In 1992 virtually all Black Sea Fleet ships earlier based in Poti , weighed anchor on Moscow's orders and left for Sevastopol. As for coastal infrastructure, it was almost completely destroyed or robbed by the Tengiz Kitovani and Dzhaba Ioseliani gangs. Until 1991 approximately 10 percent of Black Sea Fleet ships were based in Georgia's Black Sea ports. Today, however, there are only two to three rusting boats lying ashore.

Nevertheless, Eduard Shevardnadze attaches great importance to building a national navy. A corresponding legal base was put in place, Aleksandr Dzhavakhishvili was appointed navy commander in chief, and a naval school in Batumi was opened for enrollment. Although Georgia's navy so far exists only on paper, Shevardnadze's efforts pursue quite a definitive military-strategic goal. If Georgia manages to get at least a few battleships, that, according to the Georgian military, will facilitate the task of "returning Abkhazia." The fact is that the land border between Georgia and Abkhazia has been thoroughly mined by the Abkhaz army. Approximately 60,000 antipersonnel and antitank mines make invasion an impractical proposition. Therefore, from the military point of view, it would be much more expedient to land a naval assault force on Abkhazia's coast.

As concerns the political aspect of the problem, our source also said that, in making its claim to part of the Black Sea Fleet, Georgia is trying to pressure Russia to revise its position with respect to Abkhazia, promising it benefits from a new redivision of the fleet. If Georgia's claims are deemed legally valid, the fleet will have to be divided in three parts. Russia, to which Georgia is certainly ready to cede its share in exchange for a few ships or political support in the Abkhaz issue, could demand that Ukraine cede it a greater part of the fleet than envisioned under the Russia-Ukraine treaty. And, although this scenario refers to a political fiction, Georgia, by displaying tenacity, can count on certain gains.

Georgia: Council Ratifies Treaty on Destroying Biological Weapons

LD0703105996 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1330 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 6 Mar — According to an IPRINDA correspondent, the Georgian Supreme Council has ratified the convention "on dismantling bacteriological (biological) and toxic weapons and destroying their production and supplies."

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Estonia

Estonia: Foreign Ministry Concerned Over Middle East Situation

WS0703094196 Tallinn Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Release in English 1633 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Estonia is extremely concerned about the situation which has developed in Israel and in the Middle East in general. The recent acts of terrorism which have been carried out in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv seriously jeopardize the on-going peace process and destabilize the situation in the region.

The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Estonia supports the steps taken by the government of Israel to control terrorism and hopes that the Palestinian Authority led by Yasir 'Arafat will continue its efforts to stabilize the situation.

Estonia: Interior Minister Denies Reports on Arms Deals With IRA

LD0603142796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1412 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, Mar 6 (Interfax) — Estonian Interior Minister Mart Rask has refuted British and Estonian press reports claiming that deals on supplies of Russian-made arms to the Irish Republican Army were made at the Palace Hotel in downtown Tallinn.

He does not have information to prove purchases of Russian arms for the IRA in Estonia, the minister told Interfax Wednesday.

Asked whether the Estonian security police and the British MI5 counter-intelligence service are cooperating in the investigation of possible deals on Estonian territory, Rask said "the case is being investigated."

Illegal Russian traders and IRA representatives signed deals in Tallin, reported the British Daily Mail newspaper, with a reference to MI5.

According to MI5 information published by the Estonian Eesti Express weekly on February 29, Tallinn hosted at least two meetings between the Russian traders and the IRA men: one 18 months ago, and the other a year ago.

MI5 staff said the sides agreed on arms supplies via Hungary at their first meeting, and noted that they so far had no information on the second meeting.

Estonia: Background to Dispute Over Orthodoxy Outlined

MM0703115896 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Mar 96 p 7

[Article by Aleksandr Shinkin under the "Scandal" rubric: "Religious Procession Against Crusade. The Authorities in Tallinn Are Attempting To Drive the Estonian Orthodox Church out of the Country. What Is More They Are Doing This In Defiance of Efforts To Intercede by International Organizations, Including the United Nations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Orthodox Church has broken off relations with the Constantinople patriarchate. This has happened as a result of differences over the issue of the jurisdiction of the Estonian Orthodox Church, which the authorities in Tallinn are trying to drive out of the country. I will present the details of the dispute.

Headed by Archbishop of Tallinn and All Estonia Korniliy, the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (EAOC) is under the jurisdiction of the Moscow patriarchate, whose canonical territory extends to all CIS countries and the Baltics though not to Georgia. Russian missionaries brought orthodoxy to the Estonian land in the 12th century. From as early as the 16th century an eparchy of the Russian Orthodox Church has existed here.

But then the so-called "EAOC Overseas Synod in Stockholm" — which was formed by several clergymen in 1947 — suddenly declared itself to be the successor to the orthodox church in Estonia. The republic's authorities reacted to this favorably and on 11 August 1993 the "Synod in Exile" was registered in this capacity.

It was then that the troubles begun for Archbishop Korniliy and the church under his leadership. For it was not allowed to register in its own historical name and to officially receive its historical rights of succession. This in essence means the loss of its property rights and the transfer of all church premises to the "Stockholm priests." What is more, orthodox believers — a significant proportion of which are members of the Russian-speaking population — have encountered direct discrimination against their rights. The authorities are adopting a decision to evict priests from church buildings. Taxes are being levied from EAOC parishes, from which all other faiths are exempt.

When they registered the Stockholm "Synod in Exile," the authorities in Tallinn blatantly violated their own law "On Churches and Parishes" which stipulates that a faith can only operate in Estonia if its leadership is working within the country. But the authorities went

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even further. They even interfered in internal church affairs. The Estonian prime minister made a direct request in a letter to the patriarch of Constantinople for the "legal structure" represented by the Swedish group of priests to be admitted to his church.

Meantime, the authorities are blatantly pressurizing the Estonian orthodox church into declaring itself to be the "Russian Orthodox Church" with all the consequences for its property that would naturally entail.

Another process has been running parallel to this. With the collusion of the authorities, representatives of the "Stockholm Synod" have been going about energetically expropriating the orthodox church's property. This directly affects the interests of parishioners, by whose efforts and monetary contributions the majority of orthodox churches are maintained.

Archbishop Korniliy attempted to resolve the conflict in court. But the city of Tallinn's seat of Justice [Femida] refused to hear his action to have the registration of the "Synod in Exile" declared illegal. Its pretext was that the church led by him was not registered in Estonia, its charter was not recognized, and it had not been entered in the register of the country's churches.

Believers and a number of public organizations in Estonia representing the interests of the Russian-speaking population have involved international organizations in this conflict. For example, the UN secretary general, leaders of the World Council of Churches, and the Conference of European Churches have spoken out in support of the EAOC and agreed to help it resolve the problem of its registration and issues regarding the inheritance of its property. Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksiy II has appealed more than once to Estonian President Lennart Meri about this problem.

...Archbishop Korniliy's efforts have so far been unsuccessful. His last appeal to the court had no effect.

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